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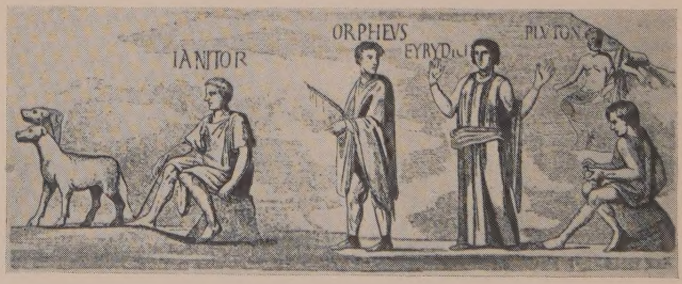
SCHERMERHORN LECTURES I

# FROM ORPHEUS TO PAUL




*Above:* Marble relief, showing Orpheus and Eurydice. This proves that the legend of Eurydice, which was quite foreign to Orphism, was current as early as the fifth century B.C. (Naples, National Museum.)

*Below:* Roman wall painting found in Ostia, illustrating the same myth; a proof of the endurance of Orphic legends.

# FROM · ORPHEUS · TO · PAUL

## A · HISTORY · OF · ORPHISM

BY · VITTORIO · D · MACCHIORO

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# PREFACE

This book contains the Schermerhorn Lectures in Religion, which I had the honor of delivering during the winter of 1929 at Columbia University. I wish to express my gratitude to the University for its hospitality; to my colleagues, Professors Wendell T. Bush and Irwin Edman and Dr. Ralph Marcus, for their co-operation; and especially to Professor Herbert W. Schneider, to whose generous efforts I am indebted for the success of my lectures and the publication of this book. I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Martha S. Greenawalt and Carol S. Schneider for their assistance in the revision of the text of the lectures and in the preparation of the manuscript of this volume.

V. D. M.

*March, 1930.*

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# FROM ORPHEUS TO PAUL

## CHAPTER I

## GREEK MYSTICISM

In order to consider Greek mysticism accurately, we must distinguish two main currents in Greek religion: state or esthetic religion; and popular or mystic religion. The first was derived from the Mycenæan civilization, and after the second millennium B.C. became the religion of the Greek states. This religion, which we may aptly call Olympian or Homeric, is the usual, well-known religion of the Greeks as it is understood by the man in the street, the religion which inspired so many poets and sculptors, from Homer to Callimachus and from Phidias to Lysippus, and which issued in the Greek-Roman culture. Highly endowed with artistic and imaginative elements, this religion exerted an enormous influence on the evolution of Greek art and poetry. But, notwithstanding its importance, this current has nothing to do with our present subject.

The popular current, which forms the second feature of Greek religious life, consists, in a word, in mysticism. It was not the product of an historically definite age or culture, but rather the spontaneous and unconscious outcome of primitive religious needs. It must be regarded as chronologically more ancient than

the state religion and, somehow, as ancient as human thought itself.

For our purpose it is necessary to go back to this primitive mysticism. It would be impossible for us to reconstruct the mentality of men who lived below the horizon of history, engulfed in the darkness of a culture which for the most part resembled savagery, if we could not, with a certain degree of assurance, have recourse to comparative religion. Thanks to it, we have been able, to a certain degree, to reconstruct the primitive mentality of mankind by analogy to what we can ascertain of primitive peoples. Without overlooking numerous differences, we can be assured in general that the primitive mentality of mankind resembled the mentality of savage tribes. This possibility of reconstructing, by way of comparative research, the prehistoric stages of human history is doubtless one of the most prominent conquests of modern science.

What is the trait that distinguishes primitive mentality from ours? It is the lack of self-consciousness. The most striking feature of primitive man is a complete absence of all ideas of the self; in other words, his inability to distinguish himself from the world, that which is inside from that which is outside, what comes to pass in his imagination from what happens in his environment. From this is derived a tendency which is peculiar to primitive tribes, and is the greatest obstacle towards a right understanding of their mentality, namely, the habit of considering the interior and the

exterior world as a whole, endowed with the same qualities, ruled by the same laws. For primitive man no line of demarcation exists between will and destiny, illusion and knowledge, or between dreams and facts. It is most probably this trait which gives rise to magic, through which man tries to exert his power over nature and satisfy his desires and longings, not so much in a logical way as by means of fantasy and imagination. The great importance attributed to dreams is also derived from such mentality. Dreams are real events for primitive people, as real as walking, running or eating. What is seen during a dream actually exists. Houses, valleys and mountains seen in dreams belong to really existent lands to which the soul goes during the body's sleep. For instance, if a man should dream that someone took his horse, there would be no doubt that the robbery was really committed and that the unfortunate imaginary thief could be justly condemned. Notwithstanding the fact that he committed no robbery he might still admit that during his sleep his soul had actually taken the horse. A man may dream that his friend has been killed and therefore feel entitled to accuse the murderer. The dream murderer cannot but admit that perhaps his soul has committed the murder during his sleep. Another man dreams that he has made a long trip abroad and afterwards gives his friends a detailed account, which they enjoy hugely, of everything he said and saw. Another, after a dream that he is bitten by a serpent, might be about to die from the imaginary

wound, should his friends not cure him. Still another dreams that he is sick, and then dies with all the proper symptoms of his imaginary illness,—fantasy and reality being one and the same thing.

In the same way there is no distinction between hallucinations and objective existences. A shadow, a cloud or a vision are quite similar to what man sees and touches. No boundary line seems to exist between the human and animal world. Some tribes claim in all good faith to be birds, kangaroos or parrots. Animals are very frequently supposed to have human needs, thoughts and habits, and hence to be human beings, masked or somehow transformed and endowed often with peculiar superhuman powers. Primitive men often make every effort, by gifts or other means, to stand on a human footing with wild beasts. It is often believed that human destiny and life is somehow connected with that of certain animals; by killing some wild beasts one may kill human beings.

Besides, shadows or images of persons are not different from the persons themselves. There is even the possibility of killing a man by running his shadow through with a sword. Portraits are supposed to be peculiarly alive and connected with the destiny of their subjects. In the opinion of some Indian tribes a portrait is endowed with the same life as the original subject. African disciples of medicine men are accustomed to make an image of the master, which they revere as the master himself. Chinese accounts tell of children born of a

widow and the statue of her dead husband; of wooden dogs that are able to run, and of living paper horses, and so on.

The primitive does not distinguish between life here and life after death. In the opinion of many tribes there is no real death at all. Death is an inexplicable accident which does not interrupt the usual run of affairs. It is very often supposed to be a work of sorcery. After death men go to another country, quite similar to the world of the living, where they continue the daily affairs and pleasures of their former lives. Very often the dead are supposed to be able to intrude, as if alive, into every concern of the living. Therefore a great effort is made to please them. A dead body is believed still to be sensitive to cold, heat, hunger and thirst. It is therefore good to provide for the physical comfort of the deceased lest he avenge himself by refusing his help to the living. There are certain parts of the body, such as the head, hands or eyes, which keep their powers even after death; so that it is advantageous to separate these parts from the bodies of dead enemies in order to prevent their further activities. The dead are sometimes supposed to come to life again, either in their original forms or in the shapes of animals. On such occasions they might be killed, if recognized, and thus die again.

Some hunting and fishing rites are to be explained by this lack of discrimination between fantasy and reality. On the whole, these rites are derived from the

belief that man is able to exert an influence over the animal world and realize his needs and wishes by means of imitative ceremonies, such as the hunting dances where the hunters, masked as bisons, bears or kangaroos, mimic these animals as closely as possible in order to attract them.

My purpose thus far has been only to call attention to this feature of primitive mentality which is of greatest importance for our particular consideration. I mean the identification of imagination and reality. But no great length of time need be devoted to this subject.

Now, the problem is whether or not we are entitled to have recourse to the comparative history of religions in discussing the Greeks. In other words, whether or not we are entitled to attribute to the Greeks a mentality that may be fitly compared, for our particular purpose, though with every due caution, with the mentality of primitive peoples. If the problem could be limited to the original stage of Greek civilization, no doubt the comparative method would be the obvious one, since we can easily admit that the Greek prehistoric mentality might have had much in common with that of other prehistoric peoples. But our task is not simply to reconstruct the prehistoric Greek mentality; our goal is to reconstruct a whole historical process, which, beginning in the primitive age, covered many centuries and stretched from the pre-Hellenic down to the Hellenistic age. In other words, we do not intend to stop at the

prehistoric origin of Orphism, but, after reconstructing that, to pursue the whole history of Orphism.

Now, some will with reason doubt whether observations of a primitive people could accurately be applied both to the prehistoric Greeks and to the Greeks of the Classical and Hellenistic ages—ages which can by no means be considered primitive.

The question is whether or not Greek mentality retained enough remnants of its primitive content through the historic age to entitle us to have recourse to them in building up a theory of the mysteries. I believe that we must answer this question in the affirmative, for I have the impression that one of the peculiarities of Greek thought was an extraordinary conservative power, which made it possible for the Greeks to retain some of the most prominent features of ancient times, notwithstanding all philosophical progress. The whole history of Greek culture bears, by the way, the stamp of a great piety for old things and thoughts, as well as great caution in passing from the old to the new. Perhaps, considering the matter from another viewpoint, one might assume that the Greeks, notwithstanding their marvelous intellectual gifts, were never capable of casting off the primitive and ancient elements in their mentality, and consequently they were never *modern.*

At any rate, I think that only this survival of primitive features can explain how it came to pass that,

notwithstanding the great advance in Greek culture, so purely primitive a thing as a mystery could last in Greece from the pre-Hellenic times down to the fourth century A.D.[1] without losing anything—aside from practical liturgical details—of its innermost essence. In other words, before trying to reconstruct the primitive mystery we must explain how the subsequent historical career of the mystery was possible.

This I shall now try to do by calling attention to some facts, which I do not claim to be exhaustive, but which may serve to present some of those primitive aspects of Greek civilization which I call the permanent primitive background of Greek thought.

Let us consider, for instance, how the Greeks viewed psychological events which in our opinion are subjective phenomena. I mean, first of all, dreams. Everyone knows that the Greeks were never able to consider dreams as subjective happenings. They always attributed an objective content to dreams. For the Greeks the soul abandoned the body during sleep; in other words, sleep was a temporary death. The difference between sleep and death was only a matter of time and degree. Xenophon claims that nothing is nearer sleep than death, not because the soul is or seems to be absent during sleep, but because the soul actually abandons the body in both cases.[2] Leucippus explains sleep by assuming that the psychic matter separates itself from the body, and Lucretius expounds the same theory.[3] Clement of Alexandria says that the initiation

ceremonies were held at night because the soul abandons the body during the initiation just as during sleep.[4]

These few testimonies suffice to prove that the Greeks, not only of prehistoric times but also of the classic age, thought of sleep in a very primitive way. The epistemological notion of dreams followed. A dream is nothing other than a peculiar sort of knowledge. What man sees while dreaming is objective reality. From this grew a very high estimate of dreams and their value as premonitions or suggestions.[5] "When the body is active," says Pindar, "the soul sleeps, and when the body sleeps the soul reveals decisions for good and evil by means of dreams." Zeus, according to Homer, sends dreams in order to lead mankind. Incubation was the practice of sleeping in the shrine of a god or hero in order to get into intimate touch with him, that he might later appear during sleep to bestow suggestions or remedies. American Indians, Japanese and Australians have very similar ideas about sleep and dreams. They believe that the soul abandons the body during sleep and actually goes into the lands which are seen in dreams.

Another point which requires consideration is the Greek conception of ecstatic phenomena, which for us belong to the realm of psychopathology, but for the Greeks were quite real happenings. The word itself, coming from the verb *exístemi* (I go out), points to a realistic conception. On the whole, ecstasy meant not only the peculiar psychological experience well

known in the history of religions, which most believers consider a mark of sanctity, but more generally, a *change*,—in other words, a practical process.[6] Aristotle says that every *metabolé*, that is, every change, is essentially an ecstatic process. According to Plato and Proclus, during ecstasy the soul goes out of the body. Therefore the *kátharsis* which was attained through ecstasy was merely a passing from one condition to another.[7] Death, as a definite passing, was but a perfect catharsis or, in other words, a perfect passing.[8]

This mechanical conception of all ecstatic phenomena, which reminds us of the Stoic mechanical explanation of feelings and emotions, is perfectly in line with primitive conceptions. A Lakemba priest said, "I don't know what I am saying. My thought leaves me and when it is far from me, God speaks to me." This realistic point of view will explain how it happened that, however strange it may appear to us, the Greeks never had an accurate idea of visions. The thing which we call a vision was a material happening for the Greeks, to be explained like a dream as an actual egress of the soul. No Greek ever doubted that the tales of after-life visions, quite similar to the eschatologic visions of primitive tribes, which were spread all over Greece, were to be considered as real events. The best statement of this is afforded by the writers themselves, who depict visions quite as though they were describing travels. In the last book of his *Republic*,[9] Plato describes with great detail the journey of the Pamphylian

Er, who, killed in war, went to the world of the dead and came back to life again after having seen the infernal punishments. The philosopher gives us an account of everything Er said and saw without the least doubt of the real existence of the world he saw. Plutarch refers us to the story of Thespesius, who, like Er, died and came to life again, but says no word which might lead us to infer that he doubts the objective truth of the story.[10] Proclus, referring to the story of Er, explains what for him is a resurrection, in the usual Greek sense, as the egress of the soul.[11]

The Greeks knew many stories like these; for instance, the story of Cleonimus who died of grief at the death of his friend, and, just at the moment when his body was being laid on the pyre, came to life again, having viewed the world of the dead with their punishments. According to another account, Eurinus came to life again a fortnight after his death and told of many things seen in the other world. There are endless others: Rufus, Hieronymus, Machates, Cleodemus and Empedotimus, about whom the same things were told, and nobody ever doubted that they died, entered a real world of the after-life, and then were resurrected.[12] I do not want to emphasize the primitiveness of this conviction of the objective reality of visions, but medicine men and shamans commonly make these claims of being able to go to the world of the dead and return to life.

Closely connected with these tales was the conception of the hereafter as a real world. The Greek never seri-

ously doubted the real existence of a world of the dead in the most strict sense of the word. From Homer down to Plato, there are many statements supporting the certitude that the Greek conceived the world of the dead, not as a mythical, but as a physical country.[13] Every Greek knew well the location of the numerous openings leading down into the subterranean realm of Hades.[14] Everybody knew the geography of this world: how many rivers there were to be found there, what these rivers were called, how it was possible to cross them, as well as what the boatman's name was. Most primitive peoples have the same realistic notion. They conceive the world of the dead to be a really existent region, the location of which is well known, and into which the dead descend, entering by crossing a river in a boat guided by a boatman.

Parallel to these notions runs another idea which was very common among the Greeks, namely, the belief that the dead are dangerous and malicious beings which must be repelled. The only means by which man can rid himself of these evil spirits is to bury the dead, for the soul is satisfied only through burial. From this developed the habit of burying every dead body whether of friend or stranger, which in the later Greek law became an effective duty. Hence, we find the custom of punishing traitors by casting away their bodies unburied. Recall also the myth of Antigone relating to this custom. There is no doubt that a good deal of what the Romans called *pietas* (piety) toward the

dead, and what they really considered *pietas,* has its deep root in these primitive concepts.

Another prominent survival of primitive thought in Greece was the conception of the sacred image. The idea that an image, either human or divine, has life and is endowed with a sort of personal energy is very common to primitive peoples. It is no wonder that we find a quite similar conception in the Greek prehistoric age. Certain myths betray a suggestion of this, as, for instance, the myth of the life-like statues made by Dædalus which he bound with cords to prevent their flying away.[15] Another myth tells us that the Rhodians learned from Athena to make living statues.[16] A third attributes the invention of moving golden statues to Hephæstus.[17] All these myths come into consideration here as reminders of a primitive notion of living images.

In the historical age we find the *xoanon.* This Greek word (its exact meaning being pillar or trunk) is used to designate very ancient divine images shaped like pillars without any human characteristics. They are often portrayed on coins. A coin of Ambracia, for instance, shows Apollo in the form of a pillar supported by a double base and crowned with laurel and ribbons. Another coin of Paphos shows Aphrodite in the form of a conic stone in a shrine. Some coins of Samos display Hera as a stone adorned with veils and necklaces. All this contributes to the certainty that these sacred pillars were considered as living beings.[18]

A most important point is that some of these coins

belong to a very late age and consequently reflect a very evolved stage of culture. In other words, they supply a certainty that the prehistoric fetishistic notion of sacred living pillars was not abandoned in the age of Aristotle. Some ritual ceremonies point to the same beliefs; for example, the sacred marriage celebrated at Limnai between the *basilissa* and the *xoanon* of Dionysus.[19] The *xoanon* of Dionysus was brought to the theater during the great Dionysia at Athens and seated in its place of honor to attend the performance.[20] The *xoanon* of Athena Polias was dressed and adorned with jewels.[21] The regular continuance of these ceremonies, taking into consideration the fact of Greek criticism which was always ready to ridicule its gods, gives abundant evidence of the validity of our theory.

The Greeks never attained a clear idea of the real nature of *xoana*. They always supposed them to be gifted with a mysterious energy. Very often, as in the case of the legendary statues of Dædalus,[22] they bound or chained them to prevent their taking to their heels.[23] In Phigalia there was a bound *xoanon* of Eurynome and at Sparta another of Aphrodite.[24] Bound *xoana* were also worshiped at Chios and Erythræ.[25]

As aforementioned, the *xoana* were believed to be gifted with a mysterious power. In Sparta young men were whipped on the altar of Artemis Orthia in order to offer up their blood to the goddess. During this cruel sacrifice the priestess held the little *xoanon* of the goddess in her hand. When the flagellation was not ener-

*Above:* Coins with representations of pillars or columns dressed as human beings, pointing to a vague anthropomorphic conception of the gods.

*Below:* A red-figured vase of the Museum of Naples, with the worship of Dionysus, represented by a pillar with a human head.

getic enough to meet the requirements of the goddess, the *xoanon* expressed its discontent by becoming increasingly heavy.[26] At Pellene the *xoanon* was carried in procession and caused sterility and death to him who dared look upon it.[27] The *xoanon* of Athena at Troy was said to have turned its eyes when Ajax injured Cassandra.[28]

This conception of sacred images as having life was not restricted to the *xoana*. Even later, when sacred images had long since ceased to be mysterious things whose origins were either superhuman or unknown, the idea still persisted that the divine image was endowed with a mysterious power. In his treatise on statues, Porphyry tells us that statues have a divine power or life of their own.[29] On this point numerous tales were current all over Greece. At Hierapolis statues were worshiped which perspired, moved and gave oracular answers.[30] Lucian tells us about a statue made by the sculptor, Demetrius, that used to step down from its base every night and take a walk in the town right before the eyes of all the people.[31] The following story was told about a statue of the athlete Theagenes, at Thasos. After the death of the athlete some of his enemies satisfied their hatred by whipping his statue. The image avenged him by falling off its base and killing its tormentors. According to Dracon's code this statue was thrown into the sea. Then a great famine came upon Thasos and an oracle ordered that the exile must return home. The order was executed, but the

famine did not in the least relent. When consulted again, the oracle explained that it had reference to the statue of Theagenes. During the discussion of means to recover the statue from the sea, some fishermen found it in their net.[32] A statue of Artemis at Antioch requested that it be brought back to its former resting place. Having been cast into the sea, the statue of Diomedes in Apulia returned of its own accord to its pedestal.[33] The statue of Heracles at Erythræ was said to have drifted to shore on a raft.[34] Vopiscus tells of a statue of Apollo which was found lying in a bed.[35] The statue of Neryllinus at Troy was believed to have the same power.[36]

The cult of *xoana* is very interesting to us because it points to an unconscious fetishism and especially to a stone cult. There is ample evidence that fetishism was well known in primitive Greece. It seems that fetishism was in full sway in the pre-Hellenic Cretan religion. A Knossos seal with the representation of an epiphany seems to point to a particular feature of Cretan religion which was not general. As a matter of fact, the Cretan religion totally lacks representations of gods; but there are abundant testimonies to a cult of pillars, trees and axes.

Pausanias says that in Pheræ the Greeks worshiped thirty square stones, each of them inscribed with the name of a god.[37] The pillar which, according to tradition, the priestess Callithoe erected to Hera at Argos was doubtless a fetish.[38] At Samos Hera was repre-

sented by a stone pillar. At Thespiæ there was a sacred pillar of Hera.[39]

It was also customary for the Athenians to place images of Apollo Agyieus before their houses. The Omphalos of Delphi was most probably a fetish.

Many relics worshiped by the Greeks might be considered remnants of a prehistoric fetishism. I mean, for instance, such things as the stone preserved at Megara on which Apollo placed his lyre when he was obliged to become a mason; or the one worshiped at Salamis on which Theseus sat on the beach watching his son sail to the Trojan war; or the stone of Arpi which was a remnant of the ballast carried by Diomedes' ship.

The cult of sacred trees was also derived from these beliefs. There was the willow at Samos under which Hera was born; the palm tree at Delos under which Apollo and Leto were born; the plane tree at Gortina which witnessed the meeting between Zeus and Hera; and the olive tree near which Io was guarded by Argos.[40]

The cult of sacred animals belongs to the same complex of beliefs. The eagle was sacred to Zeus; the peacock sacred to Hera; the dove sacred to Aphrodite; the horse sacred to Poseidon; and so on.

The conception of the sacred image as a living being, or better still as the deity itself, must be connected closely with the general notion which the Greeks had of a god and his relations with man. Despite the innate

criticism and scepticism of the philosophers, there is no doubt that the Greeks never entirely overcame the naïve idea of god and man and their mutual relations which was brought into Greece by the Olympian religion. The birthmark of this religion—I am referring specifically to the *state* religion—was the anthropomorphic conception of the divine world. The first evidences of this conception come from the Minoan age. A Mycenæan seal from Knossos shows a goddess (most probably a forerunner of the Greek Artemis) appearing in a distinctly human shape on the top of a mountain, holding a spear in her hand, before a man who, by his gesture, expresses his astonishment—a perfect epiphany.[41] It was most probably this Minoan anthropomorphism that developed and expanded into the conception of the human deities which is one of the most interesting features of the Homeric poems.

This anthropomorphic notion of God very deeply affected the Greek mind and so impressed its stamp upon Greek religion that it was never able to rid itself of its primitive anthropomorphism. The Greeks never attained a spiritual notion of God. The Aristotelian conception of God as an incorporeal being is, of course, the product of a gigantic individual intellect which stands out like a majestic, isolated rock in a huge ocean of anthropomorphic conceptions and rites. From Homer, whose poems beyond a doubt did much toward the spreading of this notion of God, down to the latest stages of Greek culture we find the state religion bear-

ing the stamp of the Homeric divinities, perfectly indifferent to the assaults of philosophical criticism. All of Greek religious life indicates the fundamental idea that the deity is an augmented and improved human being and, notwithstanding his higher level, gifted with human qualities and weaknesses. The crude ingenuity of the Homeric gods was fast overcome, but the Greeks never ceased to address their gods as human beings, whom it was wise to propitiate by the human means of offerings and gifts. As a consequence the gods were endowed with purely human personality. Greek imagination kept pace with Greek beliefs, shaping a world of gods greatly resembling men, not only in spirit but in flesh as well. The divine body was conceived to be a human body, just as the divine soul was understood to have human embodiment. This divine body had human needs. It had to be clothed, protected and nourished, and it might be wounded and cured. From this arose the belief that gods can actually be seen by mortals just as men are seen by one another.[42] An outgrowth of this was the amazing Greek notion of the divine epiphany.

The Homeric poems give many instances of epiphanies. Gods appear to men in really human shapes, being often indistinguishable from men. The same belief is usual in Greek tragedies, where gods appear on the stage as human beings. Greece was overrun by a multitude of legends concerning epiphanies.

The historian Ister wrote a book on the epiphanies of

Apollo, and Philarchus on the epiphanies of Zeus. The whole of Greek history is replete with these stories. The rite of incubation often brought about an epiphany of the deity or of the hero during the dream. In close connection with the anthropomorphic conception of the deities is the belief that gods not only appear but also speak to men, answering the questions put to them either directly or through the mediation of priests.

Here we have the origin of the oracles. It is the current opinion that there were only two or three oracles in Greece, such as Dodona, Delphi and a few others. Quite to the contrary, Greece should be thought of as a land teeming with oracles, especially from the seventh to the fifth centuries. In every place there was the cult of some hero who was supposed to be on terms of intimacy with men, giving them remedies and advice. Achilles, Alcmene, Amphiaraus, Odysseus, Amphilochus, Sarpedon, Protesilaus and others were addressed with propitiatory rites, and frequently with incubation rites, to get advice from them.

These cults of heroes give us reason to suppose that most of them really existed. Though it is customary for scholars to accept ancient heroes as mythical beings, in my opinion the cult of a person assumed to have existed and to be somehow still living, cannot, generally speaking, arise from a myth. It must have some historical background. The myth theory, which is now in disfavor, was never capable of explaining the existence of religious personages. Especially since the marvelous dis-

covery and interpretation of the Hittite tablets of Boghaz-Köi, which prove that the Homeric heroes truly existed,[43] we may assume with a large degree of assurance that most of the hero-cults are founded on true historical persons and thus point to a primitive tribal religion.

Little wonder that this habit passed from ancestral heroes to gods. I need hardly remind you that an important influence was exerted by the best-known oracles over Greek religious life. I refer especially to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi and the oracle of Zeus at Dodona. I must emphasize the fact that the long duration of these cults affords evidence that the Greeks never lost their early anthropomorphic conceptions of god. In this they always possessed something which indicates a childish naïveté.

In my opinion, the cult of relics belongs to this line of thought. I believe that the veneration of divine or heroic bodily remains originates in the belief that there is always a little life retained in a body even after death. Hence, it is a good policy to capture some of this remaining energy by cutting off a portion of the corpse. I think that this practice had, at its outset, nothing in common with what became the so-called cult of relics. Notwithstanding the miraculous power which most people attributed to relics, the cult of relics appears to me to be a survival of a primitive belief. The Greek cult of relics certainly rested on this original belief. Even an incomplete list of the most important Greek

relics gives evidence of the astounding impression made by this ancient practice. The most important relics for us to consider were, beyond doubt, bones or other parts of the bodies of heroes, such as the bones of Tantalus preserved at Argos; the bones of Pelops which were to be seen at Olympia; the heads of the children of Ægyptus also preserved at Argos; the head of Orpheus worshiped at Lesbos; even the mighty finger of Heracles which was bitten off from the hero's hand during the struggle with the Nemean lion, worshiped at Lacedæmon.

Some heroes' bones were often carried in procession from one place to another; for example, the bones of Orestes were solemnly transported to Sparta; the bones of Theseus in a like manner to Athens; the bones of Hector to Thebes and those of Hesiod to Orchomenus. It often happened that several cities claimed to possess the same relic. For instance, both Athens and Bœotia were positive that they had the true bones of Œdipus; the bones of the Dioscuri were disputed by Therapne, Sparta and Argos; nobody knew whether the true body of Hippolytus was buried in Trezenæ or Athens; such also was the fate of the relics of Agamemnon over which Mycenæ and Amyclæ disputed; and so with the bones of Linos which were the source of contention between Thebes, Eubœa and Argos. As such relics were reputed to have power to cure sickness, it became the custom to bring them out in solemn procession during epidemics.

Bodily remains of heroes were not the only objects of Greek veneration, for the same cult was devoted to other objects, such as the spear which belonged to Achilles, later preserved at Phaselis; the sword of Memnon, adored at Nikomedia; the knife of Pelops, still extant at Olympia; the arms of Diomedes, revered at Luceria. Still other instances are the cups of Alcmene at Sparta; of Helen at Lindos; of Nestor at Capua; of Æneas at Croton. Then there are the chains of Andromeda at Joppa, the letter of Sarpedon in Lycia, the ship of the Argonauts at Corinth and the anchor of Midas at Ancyra. But even more astonishing relics were worshiped in Greece and held in high esteem. Of these, I might allude to the skin and teeth of the Calydonian wild boar, preserved at Calydonia; the teeth of the Erimantian wild boar at Cumæ; or even the skeletal remains of the sea monster who failed to devour Andromeda, found at Joppa.[44] All these, and many more, which I could easily add, were I able to dwell longer on this topic, convey the impression that many prehistoric survivals never disappeared completely from the background of Greek consciousness. Notwithstanding the high degree reached by criticism, the Greek never quite rid himself of this primitive and fantastic mentality. In the light of these facts one can easily understand how it happened that magic never disappeared from Greek culture.

As I have already mentioned, the belief in magic rests on the identification of fact and fancy. From this

comes the tendency to satisfy one's desires and needs, not so much by logical as by imaginative means. In the light of these considerations, it is most important for our purpose to remember that magic never disappeared from Greece.

The Attic rite of planting an olive tree at every birth, considering both plant and child linked by a mutual destiny, points to the same belief. Athens itself considered its destiny somehow connected with the olive tree which was planted, according to the myth, by Athena on the Acropolis. In the latest stages of their history, the Greeks used to practice the same magical operations as in prehistoric times, against their enemies, the dead, or spirits, or even in healing. Considering all this, one can easily understand how it came to pass that the Greeks of the age of Plato and Aristotle in all seriousness practiced purifications by means of plaster, brimstone, water and excrements, in order to cleanse men from sin. These purifications afford evidence that the Greeks had no rigid line of demarcation between the spiritual and the material world, considering sin to be a physical weakness best removed by physical practices. Upon this blend of two distinct domains rests a group of myths, the most astonishing feature of which is an absolute lack of discriminating power and an identification of morality and matter. I refer especially to the myth of Orestes. After having killed both his father, Agamemnon, and his mother, Clytemnestra, Orestes was furiously persecuted by the

Erinyes. He took refuge at last in Apollo's shrine at Delphi, where the god delivered him by cleansing him of the murder. According to all accounts this purification took place in a mechanical way, by sprinkling the sinner with the blood of a pig. A red-figured vase, in the Louvre, which is most probably derived from a Greek sacred painting, shows Apollo holding a little pig, whose blood is flowing over the head of the young man, Orestes.

This material conception of sin recalls to us what has already been said about catharsis or purification. The Greeks somehow considered all spiritual changes as material happenings. The purification which cleansed the stain of sin from the soul was, in other words, nothing else than a material change of state, which might be most logically reached by mechanical means like the blood of a pig for a sin such as matricide, or the use of brimstone or something similar. The lustration of neophytes, which formed the preliminary act of the mysteries, belongs to this class of mechanical purifications. There is no doubt that baptism itself was, in the beginning, rooted in this confusion of spirit and flesh.

This blend of fantasy and superstitious excesses, which lay behind the veil of cultural advancement, explains how it was possible that the dreadful revivals, which might rightly be compared with some savage outbursts of collective frenzy usual among many primitive tribes, could have happened in Greece. Ancient writers

afford us full evidence concerning the Greek mystic revivals. In the last of his tragedies, the *Bacchants,* Euripides gives a vivid account of the orgiastic frenzy of the bacchants. Many Dionysiac revivals are referred to by Greek authors. Ælianus speaks of some female orgiastic revivals which broke out in Lacedæmon and Bœotia;[45] Diodorus affords a statement of an Argive revival;[46] an account of Herodotus is also worth consideration, even though it does not refer to Greece but to the flagellant revivals which took place at Busiris in Egypt during the Isiac festivals.[47] The outburst of these tremendous revivals cannot be explained without taking account of the primitive, savage feelings and emotions which lay at the very bottom of the Greek soul.

In the light of this endeavor to set in relief what I call the permanent primitive background of Greek consciousness, it will, I hope, be an easy task to understand the essence of Orphism and its survival in Greek history.

## CHAPTER II

## THE ORPHIC ECSTASY

Thus far we have endeavored to free the whole subject of Orphism from the difficulties arising out of the apparent contrasts, which a superficial observer might find, between the history of Orphism and the evolution of Greek culture. Let us now consider Orphism in the light of primitive culture, without entering into a discussion of its origin, which we shall discuss more fully later. I wish now to explain in more detail why Orphism appears to me to be a primitive religion, by emphasizing some of its primitive characteristics; and first of all, the central myth itself.

The Orphic myth is, on the face of it, a savage one. Zagreus, son of Zeus and Persephone, so runs the myth, was killed by the Titans, who tore him to pieces and devoured him. Athena rescued his heart, which Zeus then swallowed. Zagreus was reborn as Dionysus, child of Zeus and Semele. Mankind arose from the ashes of the Titans who were blasted by the lightning of Zeus.[1] The savage character of this myth, to which we shall often return in our story, is similar to that of Negro, Australian, American Indian, Bushman, Eskimo or Zulu tales.[2]

As far as we know them, the Orphic rites are also

compounded of primitive features. At least it is a striking fact that no Orphic ceremony which we have been able to reconstruct is without a parallel in primitive practices. Such rites as flagellation, plastering, and the use of the rhomb are well-known primitive practices.[3]

The secrecy to which the initiates were pledged concerning their initiations resembles that of primitive societies, which we shall develop more fully as our study advances. This secrecy regarding the ceremonies performed during initiations had a ritual character which leads us to infer a magical origin closely related to the magical character of the ceremonies themselves. That is why secrecy pertained exclusively to the ceremonies and not to the doctrines. In other words, I have the impression that the secrecy surrounding the mysteries might well be explained by the theory that the secret initiation ceremonies were a means by which initiates arrived at the enjoyment of special privileges reserved for them. In my opinion, this secrecy might well be compared with the secrecy which surrounds all magical operations. The secrecy of savage initiation sects has the same magical character.

In addition to the fact that secrecy regarding the Eleusinian mysteries was imposed by law and that violations were punished with death, there is no doubt that the Greeks attributed to it a magical aim. Evidence of this fact is furnished by several tales. Ælianus tells the story of a man who tried to know the mysteries without being initiated. He climbed on a stone to watch the

ceremonies, but fell down and died.[4] Another story tells us that a man dared to penetrate into the very *adyton* of the sanctuary, where only the hierophant was entitled to enter, and that, as a result, he fell sick with a mysterious illness which was ended by merciful death only after long suffering.[5] These legends testify to the fear of magic which surrounded these mysteries and their secrecy. A fright from which men frequently really die, is often connected with the mysteries of savage peoples.

Another point that I wish to emphasize is the primitive character of the Orphic eschatology. We are able to know perfectly what the Orphics believed regarding the blessedness enjoyed in the after-life by the initiates, because, as I said, the injunction to secrecy disregarded the dogmas or doctrines professed by Orphism, and stressed only its ceremonies. Thanks to this distinction between rites and doctrines, we are in a position to know fully the Orphic ideas of the after-life, notwithstanding the secrecy concerning the Orphic rites. Orphism bestowed a blessedness upon its initiates which resembled, on the whole, the ideal of a happy earthly life, such as the average man longs for.

In order to understand the kind of bliss enjoyed in the Orphic after-life, we must consider it in the light of early Greek ideas of the hereafter. The early Greeks considered death to be a point of departure towards a new life different from the earthly life. In their opinion death was merely an interruption in life. In the light

of this belief, the Homeric eschatology regarded the dead as poor, powerless beings,[6] and promised them no blessedness at all. But Orphism made such a promise. This longing for beatitude led to a complex of distinct notions about the hereafter involving definite after-life pleasures. But it was not able to overcome the primitive mentality, which conceived existence after death to be more or less similar to earthly life and so imagined the pleasures of the next world to be like the delights for which everyone strives here on earth. Hence evolved a number of strikingly realistic and often somewhat vulgar descriptions and fantasies.

Ample evidence is at hand concerning these Orphic notions of the after-life. The vivid picture of the delights enjoyed by initiates, which Aristophanes gives us in *The Frogs,* is a valuable record in spite of the author's jesting attitude. He describes dances, amusing conversations, childish pranks and jests differing from the familiar scenes of this life only in that they take place after death on a meadow lighted by a glorious sunshine.[7] According to Pindar's descriptions, the blessed pass their time riding prancing steeds, playing athletic games and dice, making music and singing songs.[8] Plato pictures the blessed as banqueting.[9] The pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Axiochus* describes their philosophical conversations, dances and poetic rehearsals.[10] In the sixth book of the *Æneid,* Vergil, who was unquestionably inspired by Orphism, is in perfect keeping with Pindar and Plato.[11]

This realistic conception of blessedness in the after-life is perfectly congenial to primitive mentality. The conception of primitive races everywhere, when they entertain a notion of the next world, is of an hereafter embodying those earthly pleasures which were in line with their particular needs and habits. For the Eskimos the dead devote their time to fishing.[12] According to the Russian Mordvi, the dead fell trees, saw them up and transport them or carry on commerce; the heavy drinker will find every opportunity in the hereafter to devote himself to his favorite vice; the widower will marry again, while the young girl who died before she was married will find a good bridegroom.[13] The Germans believe that dead warriors spend their time fighting against one another in Valhalla. According to the Indians of the Harvey Islands, dead warriors dance and laugh.[14] For some North American tribes the land of the hereafter is well stocked with buffaloes. According to Burmese ideas, the dead build bungalows in the after-life country and devote themselves to the cultivation of rice.[15] The tribes of the Alaskan Yukon think that the dead are dressed like the living, and that they live in a land of broad streets and fine lodges.[16] The Patagonians think that the dead go to grottoes in which they can freely devote themselves to the joys of drinking.[17] To sum up, without adding superfluous instances, everyone realizes that according to primitive beliefs one's earthly longings and wishes are fulfilled in the after-life.

We have today abundant evidence concerning the world of the dead according to Orphic ideas. The most conspicuous documents are the golden leaflets [18] found in the tombs of Thurii and in Petelia, not very far from the ancient Croton, the center of Orphism in southern Italy.[19] All of these belong to a late age, but scholars agree that they are evidence of very ancient beliefs. As a matter of fact, the contents of these leaflets appear very old, and their ritual character makes it certain that they must refer to a very early period. These golden leaflets were found in tombs belonging to an extensive necropolis explored some years ago, which consisted of a chain of tumuli lining the valley of the river Crati. Three of these were explored and each contained a stone casket. Within, covered with a white sheet, was the dead body. Near the head lay a tiny golden scroll with a fragment of poetry inscribed upon it. The content of the verses leaves no doubt about the Orphic character of these leaflets. But we shall return to them later. At present I want to emphasize the fact that one of these leaflets contains fragments of a description of the world of the dead. This description runs as follows: "In the dwelling of Hades you will find a spring on your left, and near it a white cypress; be careful not to approach this spring. You will find another from which flow cool waves from Lake Mnemosyne (lake of memory). Before you are guardians. To them you will say, 'I am the child of Gæa and Uranus (the earth and the sky) and thus belong to a celestial

race, as even you must know. Thirst wears and devours me, but give me at once of the refreshing wave which runs from Lake Mnemosyne.' And they will give you to drink of the divine spring and from then on you will rule with the heroes."

It would be out of place here to enter into detail, but consider the basic realism of this description of the world of the dead, with its pedantic precision—each detail just as it would be found in a modern itinerary, with everything that the traveler will meet clearly indicated.

These golden leaflets are, nevertheless, not the most ancient documents. Far more ancient is the Orphic description of the realm of Hades inserted in the eleventh book of the Odyssey.[20] The episode itself is well known. After having been kept for a certain time by Circe on her island, Odysseus gets permission to return to his country. But he is compelled first to visit the Grove of Persephone in order to seek the advice of Teiresias concerning his further travels. Following Circe's directions he crosses the sea and lands at Persephone's Grove. There he digs a ditch and pours in a libation of honey, wine and water with an offering of meal. Afterwards he sacrifices a ram and a black sheep, letting the blood run into the ditch. Eager for blood, the dead are enticed out of Hades. After having drunk the blood, they speak with Odysseus, answering his questions. This is, in a few words, the content of the eleventh book of the Odyssey. There is little doubt that the original story

depicted a mere magical operation performed in order to come in touch with Teiresias and receive his advice. The reason why it was of such primary importance for Odysseus to consult Teiresias concerning his journey was that Teiresias differed from the other dead in that he maintained his intelligence even in the after-life. The account of this exorcism underwent a complete transformation during the editing of the Homeric text, undertaken by Peisistratus, tyrant of Athens. The Orphic priesthood in Athens availed themselves of this opportunity for introducing into the account, which Odysseus makes of the souls seen by him, some notions of the after-life in accordance with their creeds.

Up to a certain point the tale is in line with this exorcism, for Odysseus tells about what dead he saw, and of his conversations with them. But at a definite point Odysseus' account seems to point to something quite new. He describes many souls but does not mention their coming out of the ditch at all, nor does he speak to any of them, and none of them seems desirous of drinking the blood as before.

The story is interrupted by Odysseus himself who finds that it is time for resting and sleeping, but in response to the pressing desire of Alcinous he continues his account and again describes the souls coming out of the ditch. Once more he depicts the souls as poor beings lacking power and voice. But again something quite strange happens. Achilles does not descend into the ditch again but walks off vigorously in a meadow of

asphodel. He is no longer a poor being devoid of strength. He is now the quick and energetic Achilles of the Iliad. But what does the meadow of asphodel mean? Where is Persephone's Grove? It seems that the country itself has changed. What is more, Odysseus now depicts things which he could not have seen in the Grove of Persephone on the ocean beach. He describes Minos seated on his throne with a golden sceptre in his hand, in the realm of Hades, surrounded by a crowd of souls awaiting his judgment. Next, he sees Orion hunting on the meadow; Tityus, Tantalus and Sisyphus serving their sentences in the well-known ways. Finally he sees Heracles bearing his bow and wearing a splendid belt, and speaks to him. But now something else very strange happens. After conversing, Heracles descends into Hades. In other words, we are back again near the ditch on the seashore. A large crowd of souls emerges from the ditch and Odysseus flies to his ship lest he meet the Gorgon herself.

There is no doubt that the story consists of two separate accounts: the first one taking place near the ditch on the shore, the other in some other place—the asphodel meadow, which is nothing other than Hades, because it is on this meadow that Odysseus sees Minos, the dead awaiting judgment, Tantalus, Sisyphus and others. The souls are poor, bloodless, weak beings according to the first story, but in the second, they look quite like living persons with their usual occupations. The first story concerns an exorcism, or magical operation, by means

of which souls longing for fresh blood are brought out to drink the blood which gives them momentary strength, enabling them to speak. The second story concerns a world to which Odysseus himself goes, since it was impossible for Minos and the judged sinners to come out of the pit. In other words, this last story refers to a *Katabasis*.

The first story is perfectly consistent with the Homeric conceptions of the after-life, and belongs without doubt to the original poem. It depicts one of the adventures of Odysseus and tells how it happened that the hero, after so many struggles and sufferings, was compelled to cross the ocean in order to get advice from Teiresias by means of an exorcism. I imagine that the story was much simpler in its original form and perhaps was confined to the conversation with Teiresias.

The content of the second story has nothing in common with the Odyssey itself. It does not conform at all to the Homeric idea of the after-life, and it has no connection with the story of the Odyssey. It is evident that the second story has been forced into the Odyssey and is interpolated into the original account.

What can be the origin of the second story? No doubt can arise that its origin is Orphic. It suffices to compare this story with the Orphic after-life myths expounded by Plato in his Dialogues, the *Gorgias* and *Phædo*.[21] In the *Gorgias* he says that according to the will of Zeus the dead are judged in the after-life by Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus, appointed by him as

judges of the dead. The myth of the *Phædo* tells of a huge subterranean abyss into which all rivers flow and from which they all arise again. One of these rivers is called Acheron, and it issues from a marsh where most of the souls of the dead are gathered for a length of time. Another river, named Pyriphlegethon, is a river of fire. A third river, called Styx, issues from a marsh by the same name. A fourth river is called Cocytus. All the dead go to this underground place to be judged. The good enjoy the rewards of their virtue and the wicked suffer the punishments meted out according to their sins.

Between the Platonic myths and the description interpolated in the Odyssey, there is an agreement as to the central point: the assumption that there is a judgment of the dead in the after-life. That is the chief characteristic which distinguishes the original Homeric tale from the interpolated story. The *Phædo* says nothing about the judges. The *Gorgias* says that the judges are Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus. Minos agrees perfectly with the Homeric account.

Since there is no doubt, as we shall see later, about the Orphic origin of the Platonic after-life myths, the agreement of the Platonic myth with the Orphic interpolation convinces us of its true origin. Southern Italian painted vases representing scenes in Inferno furnish another bit of evidence for the Orphic origin of this story.[22] Most of these vases, made in Apulia, show Hades and Persephone seated in a shrine; the judges

of the lower world; Tantalus, Sisyphus; the Danaides; and Heracles dragging Cerberus out of hell. The similarity of the main episodes and, in many cases, the remarkable identity of composition point to a common origin—some painting which we may plausibly assume to have been painted in Greece. There is abundant evidence to prove the existence of this Greek painting which shows the after-life punishments. Demosthenes refers to it. There was an allusion to such a painting in the Greek original of the *Prisoners* of Plautus. Cicero and the scholiast of Statius[23] refer to it. We may be assured that this original was somehow related to Orphic traditions, owing to the fact that most of the infernal vases show the person of Orpheus himself,[24] and an evident Orphic influence in many details.[25] There is also the fact that Orphism was spread all over southern Italy, centering especially in Thurii, where the Orphic tombs were discovered containing the famous golden Orphic leaflets. Thus it is easy to understand how Orphic legends attracted the attention and influenced the work of southern Italian artists.

From this mass of data we may be sure that the story, interpolated in the original Homeric account of the exorcism, was derived from Orphic traditions. Later I shall dwell further on this subject, giving it due consideration from another viewpoint, but now my purpose is only to indicate the great importance of this account for everyone who wishes to become acquainted with the most ancient Orphic notions of the after-life.

The Myth of Er contained in the tenth book of Plato's *Republic*[26] is another document which undoubtedly rests on very ancient traditions. The story runs as follows: having been killed in war, Er, son of Armenius, lay for ten days among the dead bodies. Afterwards his body was brought home and laid on the pyre. At that very moment he came to life again and told how his soul went with many others, after having abandoned his body, into a divine region where there were two openings communicating with the earth and two others with the sky. In the middle he noticed the judges sending the good through the opening on the right, which leads up into the sky, and the wicked into the left opening, leading down into the earth. They bore on their breasts signs of their former deeds. When he came along, he was told to observe everything and afterwards to return to the world of the living in order to give an account of these things to his fellow-men. Er observed that punished souls, looking very sad and sorrowful, issued from the openings on one side, and from the other side the rewarded souls came forth looking pure and serene. They all gathered in the meadow as at a joyous meeting, giving each other accounts of everything they had seen. Many asked where Aridæus was, a Pamphylian tyrant, who lived a thousand years before and murdered his father and brother and committed innumerable other crimes. Someone answered that he would never come there, and he suddenly noticed Aridæus himself among other tyrants, being tortured

by some dreadful beings who drew them chained along a thorny path to be thrown into Tartarus, where many tortures awaited them.

From here, after a journey of seven days, Er came to a place where he could see all the sky and the earth, with many other details which are of no importance to us now. There, too, he saw the three Moirai, and observed how the souls chose from the life-examples placed before them by Lachesis, each his own future life in accordance with his own experiences and inclinations; how the soul of Ajax, for instance, elected to be embodied in a lion; the soul of Agamemnon in an eagle; and that of Thersites in a monkey. But Odysseus, remembering how many sufferings and disappointments he had endured in his life, preferred to become a very humble and simple man. From there, Er went with the other souls to the field of Lethe and to the river Ameletes, whose waters make men forget all things, where he lay until a thunderstorm and an earthquake pushed all the people into the new life, until suddenly he found himself, as before, on the pyre.

Plutarch [27] gives us another picture of the after-life in his treatise on the vengeance of the gods. The story runs as follows: a man, called Aridæus, died. After having sensations and emotions resembling those of falling out of a boat into the sea, he felt a grateful release and found himself in another country, where he noticed many great and splendid stairs, and his soul, moving very easily and rapidly, was transported here

and there as by a mild breeze. He observed that the souls of the dead went above and moved in different directions, sometimes pushed up, sometimes thrown down. Most of them were unknown to him, but on recognizing some, he tried to speak to them. They did not listen at all, and sped away here and there, alone or in groups, weeping and crying as though greatly frightened. He noticed other souls at the top of a very splendid place moving towards each other with great benevolence and joy. Here he noticed someone who resembled a relative, but he was not sure of it. This soul came near and greeted him as Thespesios. He replied that his name was not Thespesios, but Aridæus. But the other replied, "Yes, Aridæus in former life, but Thespesios (which means 'told by God') from now on, because you are not dead. According to the divine will you came here only in the spirit, and a proof of this is that souls have no bodies and cannot observe." Then Thespesios noticed a large number of souls, different in looks, being punished by Adrastia. Afterwards he went on, pushed by a wind, to a place like an abyss in which grew trees, plants and flowers for the souls to enjoy. Going on he came to another place, where he noticed a great basin into which flowed rivers of various colors. He was told that this was the very place reached by Orpheus when he descended into Hades to recover his wife. Afterwards he went to the place of punishments, where first he had some sad and dreadful visions and then recognized many relatives and friends, who, tor-

tured in many awful ways, wept and wailed. Finally, he noticed his father covered with wounds, raising his hands to him, obliged by his persecutors to confess to a dreadful crime he had once committed. He noticed that the souls were tortured and punished more or less according to their sins. Hypocrites, for instance, were forced to disgorge their intestines with dreadful suffering; other souls were forced under torture to reveal their innermost and true essence; other souls, interlaced with each other like serpents, avenged themselves by devouring one another; while still other souls, vainly trying to escape, were plunged by demons alternately into hot and then very cold lakes. After having observed the process of the rebirth, a strong blast of wind blew his soul into his body again and he opened his eyes.

We can be assured that these descriptions of the world of the dead are derived from very ancient sources, notwithstanding the fact that here and there they present more modern thought. At any rate the remodeling did not go so far as to obliterate the general character of these accounts. Furthermore we can be assured that they are to be brought into connection with Orphic beliefs, on the strength of their general agreement with the Orphic Katabasis of the Odyssey. The ancient traditions agree in attributing the first notions about the world of the dead to Orpheus. According to Olympiodorus,[28] it was Orpheus who named the infernal rivers. Diodorus assumes that Orpheus introduced the punishments of the wicked and the meadows of the blessed.[29]

In other words, ancient traditions unanimously attribute to Orpheus the first notions of a world of the dead as it is described to us in the Odyssey and by Plato. Or, we might say, ancient writers attributed the *invention* of these accounts, the first notion of a real world of the dead with its joys and sorrows, to Orphism.

The astonishing realism of these descriptions, which depict the after-life world as if it were a real world, is of primary importance for us. There are meadows with flowers, springs and trees; there are paths and roads leading in various directions; and the journey through this world takes a great deal of time. In this place the souls spend their time in banqueting, conversing, playing and jesting; they have horses, arms and furniture at their disposal. There is no difference between this world of the dead and the world of the living. The Orphic description interpolated in the eleventh book of the Odyssey shows how deeply these realistic tendencies in Orphism were rooted; the dead are depicted as wounded, transfixed by swords and bearing their still bloody armor. Vergil pictures Eriphyle and Deiphobus in the same way.[30] An Apulian amphora now in Munich, with infernal pictures, shows the Heraclidæ still bearing the wounds inflicted on them by Heracles.

This is in accordance with primitive beliefs. Primitive people conceive the world of the dead as a real world by no means different from this one, the dead going there in a very natural way as though they were

taking a trip. The itinerary, though sometimes difficult, is well known and the dead often receive travel directions for their journey into the hereafter. The Obschibeva have a secret society whose members know all the dangers to be encountered along the journey after death, as well as the formula which helps them out of difficulties and leads them to paradise. In West China the priest recites the *to mo* to the dead, which is the itinerary of all towns and rivers which the soul will encounter, and he leaves the soul when it has reached the Taliang mountains, the realm of the dead.[81] It is unnecessary to call your attention to the fact that all this is a striking reminder of the golden leaflets of Thurii and their travel directions.

Now, how are we to consider these descriptions of the after-life? In my opinion, the starting point of the Orphic ideas of the after-life was in visions. On this point we must again have recourse to the comparative history of religions, which can supply us with many conspicuous documents of primitive after-life visions, so definite and precise as to give the impression of reality.

A striking instance of realistic visions is furnished by the Hako ceremony of the Pawnee Indians.[82] The most prominent episode of the whole ceremony consists in some ritual songs which invoke and provoke the vision of the ancestors. The songs describe the visions as produced by the dead hearing a summons in their dwelling place above, and descending to pass over the earth, making their way past the door of the lodge

where they stop, enter, move around and fill the space, touching all the people and then walk away and ascend again to their abode.

Another instance of realistic visions is furnished by a ceremony performed by the natives of the Hood Peninsula, New Guinea.[83] After the burial, at sunset, an old man or an old woman, believed to be gifted with unusual insight, sits on the tomb looking into the increasing darkness among the palm trees. Sitting quietly, the seer soon beholds an ancestor approaching, and then other ancestors are seen coming nearer and nearer until finally the spectator falls into a frenzy. Soon after, the visions disappear.

Other realistic visions are seen by the young Sioux Indians before the initiations. They are obliged to stay in isolation for a number of days, while the spirits of their ancestors appear to them, foretelling their future and inspiring them.[84] Some conspicuous instances are supplied by the so-called ghost dance religion, an ecstatic revival among the American Indians, which will later require our attention.[85] This religion centered around some ecstatic visions during which people saw the dead and conversed with them. About the first manifestation of this religion, I am told there is a French account now belonging to the Historical Society of Michigan. In 1762 an unknown medicine man decided to go to the world of the spirits in order to know the Master of Life. After some magical rites he fell into a profound sleep, dreaming that he was about to take a journey and

would attain his goal if he went on. The next day he took his gun and began his journey. He went on and on. The evening of the eighth day brought him to a place where three trails met. Here he set up his wigwam and lighted his fire. As the night grew darker the trails became more distinct. The following morning he tried one of the trails but a huge fire forced him back. The second trail likewise led to a fire. Finally the third path led him to the foot of a high, inaccessible mountain. A beautiful maiden, dressed in white, told him that he would find the Master of Life on the top of the mountain, and ordered him to bathe himself before undertaking the ascent. Following her commands, he stripped himself and bathed in the river. Without clothing himself again he ascended the mountain. The maiden disappeared. He came to a plain containing villages and many lodges. A splendidly dressed man met him at the entrance of the first village and kindly led him to the Master of Life, who exhorted him not to endure the whites any longer, to make his people abandon drunkenness, war and polygamy, and gave him a prayer. The man was led down to the river again; he dressed and returned to his own village, where he delivered the prayer to the chief of the tribe. The revolt of Pontiac had its origin in this vision.

Another instance is the story that another prophet of the ghost dance religion, Biänki, tells of how he once met three young men on horseback, who had died many years before. He asked one of them about two

brothers of his who had died some time before. Following their directions, he met both young men riding back from a buffalo hunt. Going on, he came to a huge meeting of Iowa Indians, dancing the ghost dance around a tree. He asked for his relatives and found his father, brothers, sisters and many children feasting on roast buffalo meat. Just at the moment when they invited him to share their meal he awoke to find himself on the top of a mountain.

Another instance is afforded by the account of an Australian initiate who told how his father, by whom he was initiated, led him into the woods and put two crystals on his chest which caused his body to vanish. Then he drank water containing crystals and was capable of seeing the spirits. Next he descended with his father into a grotto, where dead spirits rubbed him with crystals. They then left the cave and came upon a serpent with a string tied to its tail. Taking the string, they followed the serpent and walked among many tree trunks, reaching at last a huge tree. The serpent descended into the earth, and they followed it to a place where they saw the good Daramulun surrounded by many little Daramuluns. Afterward they were lifted with two strings by a bird into the heavens and went through the clouds and saw on the other side the god, Bajame. A little while later the neophyte found himself in the woods again.[36]

As I repeated above, all these visions bear a very realistic stamp. They always depict fantastic countries

and persons just as though they were actual. In this regard they exactly resemble the Orphic accounts, affording a proof of the visionary content of the Orphic eschatologic stories.

In order to bring the Orphic visions into still closer connection with primitive visions, I wish next to emphasize the fact that the primitive visions usually refer to the after-life; they always lead to the world of the dead or at least to intimacy with the dead. As a matter of fact, the belief that it is possible for living men to go to the world of the dead is prevalent among primitive people. Eskimos, Melanesians, Siberians, Negroes and Australians believe that shamans and medicine men are gifted with the power of going to the land of the dead and coming back again to life.[37] It sometimes happens that a new religion arises from these visions. That was the case with the ghost dance religion already referred to. Similarly a mystic revival among the Menomini Indians originated in the vision of a woman who saw the world of the dead, and, while there, was commanded by her dead father, himself, to return to the world of the living.[38]

This realistic character, the primitive essence of which is, if I am right, established beyond a doubt, never disappeared from Greek ritual visions. The account of Apuleius, referring to the initiation in the Isis cult, is a notable confirmation. "I attained the limits of death," says the initiate, "and went beyond Proser-

pina's threshold. I traveled all over the elements. At midnight I saw the glittering sun. I approached the gods of heaven and hell and I worshiped them." [39] Although Apuleius is silent about the details of his visions, there is no doubt that they had a realistic content. An astonishing statement of realistic visions is found in the well-known Mithraic liturgy published some years ago by the German scholar, Dieterich.[40] In it are careful descriptions of the visions which appear one after the other, keeping pace with the recital of the liturgy. First the sphere of the sun opens itself into a vast circle and fiery doors appear. After a prayer, at a clap of thunder, the doors open wide and the gods are seen. Another prayer, and a beautiful, young, fire-haired god appears in a white robe, a scarlet mantle over his shoulders and a fire garland over his brow. A third prayer, and other doors open from the depths of which come seven young serpent-faced gods with linen aprons and gold diadems. Between a series of lightnings and earthquakes, appears a bright-faced god, wearing a white robe and a golden crown, bearing the shoulder of a golden calf in his right hand.

We may now summarize the argument thus far. I have taken the first steps along the path of a reconstruction of primitive Orphism, beginning with an attempt to show how many aspects of the Orphic myth and ritual point to a very low degree of culture. I have considered the Orphic eschatology, as illustrated in Orphic tradi-

tions and documents, in the light of primitive realism. Finally, I have compared these eschatological descriptions with primitive visions of the after-life. The conclusion which, in my opinion, we must draw is that Orphism was at its outset an eschatologic religion arising in primitive times from visions of the after-life.

## CHAPTER III

## THE ORPHIC MYSTERY

Basing our argument on a comparison with similar primitive features, we have seen that Orphism originated in visions, and we concluded that these primitive visions had an eschatological character. Now we can take a further step and try to prove the collective character of these visions. This point requires very careful consideration, because no religion whatever could have arisen from individual visions. Taking for granted that the origin of Orphism lay in visions, the mere fact that from these visions arose a social, collective movement implies the possibility of collective visions.

In accordance with the method that we are following, we shall find help in the comparative history of religions and more especially in the ghost dance religions, referred to above. The ghost dance religion consisted in many revivals which broke out among American Indian tribes during the nineteenth century. Many of these revivals have no special interest for our present purpose, while others have a decided importance, as they furnish some prominent instances of collective visions.

One of these revivals occurred in 1890, due to Wovoka, the real prophet of the ghost dance religion.

During an eclipse he fell into a trance, and felt himself transported to another world, where he saw God and a great multitude of departed souls in a beautiful country, each occupied with his customary concerns and games. After having shown him all these things, God told him to go back to earth and exhort his people to love one another, and to be honest. God added that in so doing they would, on dying, join their friends in the other world, where they would live free from sickness and from the pains of death. He afterwards learned a peculiar dance which he was to teach his people. By performing this dance for five days his people would attain happiness. Finally God bestowed upon him the control of the elements, so that he was able to produce rain or snow. Wovoka returned to the world and taught this new religion, which spread rapidly all over the Indian country, and became a sort of national religion.

The pivot of this cult was the belief that for all Indians, whether alive or dead, there would come a time when they would be gathered together in a regenerated earth to live a happy life, free from sickness and death. Centered around this focal point, every tribe founded its religion according to its particular needs, and every apostle remodelled and enlarged the original creed according to his own visions. Each of these various ghost dance religions had an ethical system, a theology and a liturgy of its own. The very basis of the liturgy was the dance, practised at regular intervals during five days.

All believers took part in the dance, wearing special shirts adorned with mythological symbols or drawings of visions, supposed to have magical power. Several accounts and relics of the dances are extant. Wovoka used to sit down in the center of the meeting and the members of his tribe would dance around him. Once, when the assembly was gathered together, Wovoka began to tremble violently and to sing, until he fell down apparently lifeless. They danced all through the night around the prophet, who was lying there insensible. At another time a dance was held in which more than a thousand members participated, dancing all through the night until the break of day. When the excitement had reached a climax, the medicine men announced that those assembled were about to see their dead relatives and friends. A chorus of savage cries burst out like a clap of thunder, and the people all fell down in a trance. An Indian, asked why he was persuaded that a new prophet had come to earth, claimed that the dancers actually died at every dance. Asked why he believed that they really went to the other world, he replied that the proof of their real death consisted in the little objects and pieces of buffalo meat which they brought back with them from the after-life. Asked again what these dead had seen, he replied that they had seen a happy hunting ground and many people and other peculiar beings, who welcomed them most kindly, inviting them to eat; and that they had seen their relatives and spoken with them.

Another particular branch of this ghost dance religion was founded in 1890 by the Indian medicine man, Sitting Bull. In this year a great meeting of three thousand Indians took place. They had been dancing for two weeks when Sitting Bull, who was the leader of the dances, announced that he was about to perform a great miracle in the presence of all the people. He touched certain of the dancers on the foreheads with an eagle feather, which caused them to fall in a trance. Upon recovering they told of having been in another world and having spoken with dead friends just as with living persons. Some of them composed songs based on these visions. The new religion gained ground rapidly among the Indians. Each new dance brought new visions and new songs and, from time to time, new prophets arose. Following the suggestions of Sitting Bull, rules were drawn up regarding the time of the meetings—they were now to take place every six weeks. Songs were sung during the dances, in which the world of the spirits was described. Great numbers of the dancers fell entranced and had visions of the after-life; they saw their friends, they ascended into the sky and heard messages from the after-life. These songs were gathered and written down to form a sort of sacred text which neophytes learned and sang during the dances, and by which they were excited to new ecstasies, which in turn became the starting points of fresh visions.

The ghost dance religion is, without doubt, the best example of a religion based upon collective visions,

viewed by many persons at the same time and controlled by a liturgy. But primitive religions can supply many such instances. The Hako ceremony of the Pawnee Indians, referred to before, is another example of a collective, controlled vision.

But there are other examples of collective visions not taken from primitive religions. According to the *Historia Monachorum,* monks saw angels during their meetings in church.[1] In the Martyrdom of Saint Matthew,[2] it is told that a whole congregation had the vision of Saint Matthew, accompanied by two men dressed in white, preceded by a child. Before the child they saw a cross on a chest, and heard the angels answering their songs.

During the medieval ecstatic epidemic, called the Dance of Saint Vitus, it often happened that many of the participants claimed that they had seen the sky opened and visions of the Savior and the Virgin.[3] During the rebellion of the Camisards in France it often happened that a whole crowd heard songs and psalmodies in the sky. The collective vision rapidly spread here and there. Trumpets and drums were often heard mingled with the songs.[4] During a curious religious mania, which broke out in 1817 at Buch in Switzerland, many children supposed that they had seen the Savior. The English mystic, Pordage, who founded a society of Philadelphoi in the time of Cromwell, relates that once during a meeting all the members of the brotherhood became ecstatic simultaneously and had various

apocalyptic visions which appeared night and day during an entire month.[5]

My purpose in referring to these later and somewhat modern instances is not to put them on the same level with primitive collective visions, but rather to convince you that collective visions, notwithstanding the fact that they belong to the normal primitive mentality, can by no means be considered as merely a primitive peculiarity, and that we can therefore admit collective visions as a possibility in the classical Greek age. From this viewpoint more recent collective visions are as valuable as primitive ones. At any rate there is no reason to doubt that Greece witnessed the phenomenon of collective visions. We have already related many ancient statements referring to mystic revivals, chiefly Dionysiac. We cannot suppose that these revivals were without visions. We cannot understand, for instance, the description of the bacchantic orgies given in Euripides,[6] without assuming that collective visions played a great, perhaps a leading, part in them.

Moreover, we still have extant several testimonies to the mystery visions, notwithstanding the care taken by the ancients to avoid any disclosure. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for instance, in order to depict the rapid changes of feeling and emotion caused in him by the reading of Demosthenes' speeches, compares himself with the initiates of the mysteries who can, thanks to the perfumes, the noises and the spirit of God, receive many and diverse visions.[7] Proclus very often alludes to

the visions of the mysteries. During the initiations and the mysteries, Proclus says, gods often appear in many shapes and under changing forms. From them there issues a light, often of indefinite form, sometimes shaped like a human being, sometimes passing to other forms.[8] Proclus describes visions that follow certain prayers, as well. After pronouncing the invocation, he says, you will see a fire formed like a child, which will spread itself through the air like a mist, or a fire without any distinct form from which a voice will come to you, or a rich light which will roll itself on the ground, or a horse-like lightning, or a glowing child riding a swift steed, either covered with gold or naked.[9] Proclus also speaks of voices and visions which some people hear and see, while others do not.[10] Psellus speaks of demoniac shapes arising from the depths of the earth, or descending from above.[11] Iamblichus speaks of holy visions which bestowed a new life upon the soul.[12] The monk Markos, who had once been initiated in the mysteries, describes in a dialogue of Psellus the theophany as a fiery splendor like a falling star.[13] Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of fire shapes accompanied by noises and perfumes.[14] These descriptions of moving and changing light forms bear an astounding resemblance to some descriptions of spiritualistic phenomena of light forms.[15]

But I will pass on to another problem. Granted that visions had a leading part in the initiations, we cannot admit that the visions were left quite freely to the

initiates. From a complex of free individual visions there never could arise the series of ideas, traditions or dogmas, which form the backbone of Orphism as of every religious history. Furthermore we know that Orphism had a very precise theological structure, that among the sacred Orphic books there were a number of *Katabaseis,* or Descents into Hades, of which one had been attributed to Orpheus himself.[16] Undoubtedly these *Katabaseis* were based upon visions; in other words, there is no doubt that from the tales of after-life visions there arose a peculiar eschatological literature, in which the after-life world was depicted in accordance with these primitive visions. We know that this was the case in the ghost dance religion. Visions were described by songs; these songs formed a sort of an after-life literature which then became the source of the after-life doctrines.

All this must be considered in the light of primitive realism. In order to understand how it is possible for a theology to arise from visions, we must take into account the important fact that these visions, both among the Greeks and among savage tribes, were considered, according to the realistic mentality of primitive men, as real happenings. Since primitive men have no doubt of the real existence of things seen during dreams, they cannot doubt the objective truth of visions. For primitive man a vision is nothing but a journey. There is no reason for doubting the account of somebody who

tells what he has really seen, just as there is no reason to doubt that an American gentleman has seen Rome or Florence when he describes these cities.

Realism is, in other words, the key to an understanding of how theology arises from visions. The first medicine men or prophets, who were believed to have actually seen the world of the dead, originated a science of the after-life by the realistic interpretation of their visions. Had people been able to consider visions as subjective phenomena, no theology whatever would have been derived from them. Owing to the fact that they were believed to have actually descended into the world of the dead, everyone was expected to see the same things. Similarly, every American about to visit Rome or Florence thinks that he will see the same things described to him by others who have gone before him. None of the people whom the prophet, be he Sitting Bull or Orpheus, sent to the world of the dead believed he would see things different from the account of the master himself. His imagination was full of the master's accounts, cherished by him as a sacred story. He was, as it were, psychologically compelled to see more or less the same country that the master had seen: the same rivers, the same meadows and the same persons. Returning to life, the disciples, therefore, on the authority of their visions, restated their masters' descriptions. In this way there arose a science of the world of the dead; men became perfectly familiar with it and

able to describe its rivers, its meadows and its trees. This spirit of primitive realism is, in my opinion, the origin of theology.

Proclus points to these links between theology and ecstasy when he says that the mysteries afford evidence of the power of myths. According to him, by using the myths to disclose the truth about God, the mysteries exert an influence over the souls so that some of the initiates are astounded and filled with divine fear, others go out of themselves and are filled with God.[17] Similar links between theology and ecstasy can also be found in primitive Christianity. According to some early Christian liturgies nothing adorned the church but a great cross hanging on the wall concealed by a curtain. When the curtain was removed the great cross would appear in all its solemnity. At this moment they began the so-called Prayer of the Cross, in other words, the recital of the liturgy, and at the same time visions appeared to the audience.[18] These visions, suggested and directed by the liturgy, unrolled themselves as a fantastic film till at the moment of the Eucharist the audience viewed God and angels in their midst. Sometimes mystic ecstasies were incited by reading the liturgies. Tertullian tells the story of an old woman supposed to have received the gift of divine grace because she was able to converse with the angels and sometimes with God, himself; and visions were suggested to her by songs or liturgical recitals or by the reading of the Bible.[19] The

Camisards heard the same songs that were sung during the divine service.[20]

But let us return to the visions. Their realistic content affords a solution of one of the most insistent problems which have claimed the attention of philologists: the problem of whether or not the mysteries used scenery. The problem is closely related to the wider problem of the nature of the mysteries.

Formerly, scholars agreed that scenery—of whatever kind it might have been—played an important part in the sacred *dromenon,* that is, in the enactment of the initiations. Most of them supposed that the mystery was a sort of mass or sacred performance, or something like a primitive tragedy. Students believed that they had found philological support for their assumption in some allusions of Greek writers to statues or images.[21] But the exploration of the Telesterion of Eleusis, the room where the neophytes were initiated, rendered this assumption quite futile. The Telesterion appeared as an enormous square hall surrounded by stone steps on which the initiates were seated; but the space where the supposed performance should have been enacted was filled with pillars supporting the ceiling. In the Age of Peisistratus, the pillars were twenty-five in number; there were forty-two in the Roman Age. The presence of these pillars excludes every possibility of scenery, because no performance, however simple, could have been enacted in this room where nothing but pillars could be seen.[22]

Other scholars, gifted with greater imagination, supposed, in order to explain the statues alluded to by ancient writers, that gigantic painted images of wood or linen came out of the ground by means of machinery similar to the machinery still in use in our theaters today. But excavations show that the Telesterion rested on solid rock and that nothing justifies the supposition that machines or mechanisms for raising and lowering images ever could have existed under the Telesterion. The same construction with pillars supporting the ceiling is found in the Cabirian Telesterion of Samothrace.[23]

Other support for this viewpoint arises from the absence of any mention in the expense accounts of the Eleusinian sanctuary of either scenery or machinery.[24] As a matter of fact, aside from archeological findings, one could imagine complicated scenery only in the late ages and at important centers such as Eleusis.[25] But no one would venture to suggest that the Greeks of the eighth or seventh centuries B.C. had such complicated theatrical machinery at their disposal, especially in view of the fact that the first tragedies of Æschylus had no scenery at all.[26]

In order to solve the problem, we must again try to reconstruct the primitive age in which the mystery arose; and in this inquiry our greatest aid comes again from comparative religion. Primitive and oriental peoples are familiar with sacred performances, but not with the use of scenery. The sacred Japanese dramas, de-

rived from very old mystic dances, are enacted without scenery. The stage is a simple scaffolding on wheels, covered with a curtain.[27] In the Persian sacred dramas, called *Tazieh,* which bear a striking resemblance to Greek mysteries, there is no scenery at all. The stage is a scaffolding on which all the actors stand, appearing each in turn according to the drama. Instead of scenery there are properties which function as scenery. For instance, a heap of straw stands for the Kerbela desert and the actor takes a handful of it to show that he is now in the desert. A basin of water recalls the river Tigris, a circle of lighted candles reminds the audience of the glory of Paradise, a circle of swords represents a battle, and so on.[28]

In India, also, symbols are often substituted for scenery. There is a mystery in which Hatzidaki, the morning star, kills the serpent that lives in the sea of the dawn. The serpent is symbolized by the girdle of one of the actors.[29] The medieval mysteries also supply instances of magical symbols. For instance: the altar is substituted for Christ's tomb; a small tabernacle built in the middle of a church represents Emmaus.[30]

How is it possible for symbols to be substituted for a whole set of scenery? By appealing to the imagination, of course. But this appeal presupposes one condition, namely, that the meaning of the symbols be well known beforehand. Symbolism is like a language, akin to it and governed, in a way, by the same laws. No thought may be transmitted if people are ignorant of the symbolical

content of words. An unknown language is an aggregate, not of symbols, but of sounds which mean nothing. A language becomes a complex of symbols only when it is understood. The same thing happens to things or objects. Anything can acquire meaning and value as a symbol, but its meaning must be known beforehand. No one ignorant of its real significance would ever take a handful of chopped-up straw to be a symbol of the Kerbela desert. A girdle could never symbolize a serpent as long as it is considered merely as a girdle without any connection with the serpent.

In other words, symbols require a foreknowledge of their significance derived from mythology. The link between myth and symbol consists in the fact that symbols acquire their meaning through myth. If one does not know the myth of the serpent killed by Hatzidaki, one cannot understand the meaning of the girdle. If one does not know the story of how Hussein's family died in the desert of Kerbela, one could never consider a handful of straw to be the symbol of this tragic event. On the other hand, myths become living facts through symbols. Symbols evoke the myth and bring people into touch with it. After having thought, many times perhaps, of the Hussein story, a moment comes when the symbol compels one's imagination to see it, to realize it no longer as a myth but as a fact. A very eloquent instance is the cross, a very plain symbol which means nothing for many people, but becomes the starting point

of a whole series of visions and emotions in the case of the stigmatists.

Applying this to the mysteries we can now understand what was the real importance of the symbols shown to the initiates during the initiation. We are fortunately in a position to know these symbols, thanks to Clement of Alexandria, who after having been initiated, or at least after having become very intimately acquainted with the initiations, became a steadfast adversary of the mysteries and did his utmost to represent them as a vulgar, despicable thing. Thus it seemed important to him to disclose the symbols shown in the Orphic mysteries. These symbols were a whip-top, dice, a ball, apples, a rhomb, a mirror and a fleece.[31] All these symbols referred to the story of Zagreus; they recalled the games by means of which the Titans distracted the mind of the young god while they killed him. They have the same function of recalling these events as the handful of straw in the Persian *Tazieh,* or of the cross in Christianity. They symbolized and recalled the sacred story which formed the focus of the mystery itself. In the Eleusinian mysteries there were also symbols. Hippolytus mentions an ear of corn which was shown to the initiates during the *epopteia.*[32] Proclus very often speaks of the presence and function of symbols, alluding to the influence exerted by them upon the initiates in order to render them more sensitive to the ceremonies, and to lead them to the divine com-

munion.[33] Proclus adds that the *dromenon* (the sacred drama) was preceded by a series of surprises produced partly by things that were shown and partly by things that were told.[34] In my opinion, "the things that were shown" are to be understood as symbols.

There is an amusing story showing how easy it is to awake collective visions by means of symbols. Once during a storm the French frigate "La Belle Poule" lost sight of the sloop "Berceau" and the crew was anxious about its fate. All at once the look-out announced that there was a boat on the sea. Everyone saw a raft full of shipwrecked men being towed by two boats, signalling for help. The frigate at once sent a boat towards the raft, but they found nothing but a tangle of floating tree trunks.[35] The trunks acted as symbols, and the imagination of the seamen, who entertained no doubts as to the sad destiny of the sloop, built up a complete scene of a dramatic shipwreck.

In addition to symbols, a great part was probably played by statues or divine images. In order to understand the proper function of these images we must consider them in the light of the Greek conception of statues. As I have said previously, the Greeks always considered divine images as more or less alive. I suppose that especially the images shown in the mysteries must be regarded from this point of view, owing to the mysterious and magical character of the initiation itself. If I am right, we can easily understand how by showing or disclosing sacred images the mysteries made

a deep impression on the initiates and led them to feel a particular reality in the myth. If one thinks how important for mystic experience a simple image of Christ may be, and what a conspicuous part the crucifix has always played in Christian ecstatic phenomena, one can easily imagine what a tremendous impression might have been made by the sudden view of an image of Dionysus or Demeter, which was considered as almost equal to the gods themselves. In order fully to understand the psychological bearing of these divine apparitions and at the same time to do justice to the ancient statements referring to the statues in the mysteries, we must rid our minds of our modern idea of statues as noble and beautiful products of art, and picture these images as similar to the *xoana,* as savage idols replete with tremendous power, perfectly capable of killing or of making a person mad or sick.

Another point requires our attention: the songs. According to the ancient testimonies, songs played a great part in the mysteries. Pamphos and Musæus were believed to have composed songs which the Lykomides used to sing during the enactment of the mysteries.[86] All the prophets of Orphism, beginning with Orpheus himself, were believed to have been excellent singers. Iamblichus alludes to songs which prepared the neophytes for the epiphany of the gods.[87] Of course we must try once more to view these songs in a primitive light, similar to the songs of the ghost dance religion, a means by which visions were evoked and directed.

In other words, these were magical songs, *epodaí*, as the Greeks said, and they were believed to be endowed with divine power. They most probably contained descriptions of the after-life and perhaps it was from these songs that the Katabasis arose, a poetry depicting the world of the dead. This process might be fitly compared to the formation of the Greek epos from single songs.

In order to get as clear an understanding as possible of these phenomena, let us consider other instances. Primitive Christianity furnishes striking statements of the magical power of sacred songs or recitals. In the thirteenth hermetic treatise it is said that the palingenesis is attained by virtue of a hymn. During the song the wicked powers recede and are succeeded by the good.[38] The fifteenth treatise calls the hymn God's manifestation, and everyone who sings is said to be full of the divine power.[39] According to Origen's opinion, the songs are endowed with a physical power, and everyone who sings them attains something of this power whether for good or for evil, in accordance with the nature of them.[40] Origen points out somewhere the fact that Christians owed their strength to divine names and appellations, including the name of Jesus, himself.[41] In other words, the early Christian songs were quite magical in character.

Symbols, images and songs all point to a single aim: to excite the imagination of the initiates and to produce visions in accordance with certain dogmas or beliefs.

In other words, what at first sight appears to have been a mere product of complicated scenery, rivers, woods, meadows, etc., is on further knowledge perceived to be a product of the imagination. Of course we must take into consideration the great imaginative power of the primitive Greeks and, generally speaking, of primitive peoples. An astounding instance of this extraordinary imagination is the complicated vision seen by the Australian initiate referred to previously. Everyone, reading the description given by the initiate himself of all the things he viewed, will at first undoubtedly think that it is impossible for a man to take such complicated journeys through woods and meadows simply in his imagination. But Howitt himself, in his account of Australian initiation rites, furnishes a definite proof of the visionary character of the journey described by the young man. He says that according to the initiation ceremonies, the young man had been buried and that during his vision he lay in a ditch covered with earth and branches, in order to symbolize death and resurrection.[42] There is no doubt, therefore, that his account, no less detailed than an account of a real journey, can be regarded only as an imaginary trip.

What is for us somewhat difficult to recover is this extraordinary power of the imagination. Yet it is impossible for us not to admit what is perfectly true, that the first Æschylian tragedies were performed without stage or scenery in the middle of the orchestra as though the story were a real event. In the center of the

orchestra there was only a symbol which indicated a definite locality: in the *Suppliants,* it is the altar built in honor of the four Argive gods; in the *Persians,* the tomb of Darius; in the *Seven Against Thebes,* the altar of the protecting gods of Thebes. The theatre of Dionysus at Athens had no fixed scenery until the fifth century. Some improvised scenery was constructed in accordance with the contents of the tragedies.

On the other hand, it is of great interest to us that dramatic technique, after having reached the climax of realistic reconstructions, seems now to be tending towards fantastic and symbolical scenery, far removed from any objective facts and relying mainly upon the imagination of the spectators.

Now, returning to the Greeks, we must not forget what I explained at the outset, that the identification of reality with fantasy is a birthmark of primitive thought, and the Greeks never completely outgrew it.

At any rate we must not look at these psychological phenomena as something which is absolutely past for us and which our understanding cannot fully grasp. For some artists, imagination is so powerful that it takes them into a visionary life which is for them as real as actual life. The characters, for instance, in the novels of Dickens assumed for him a sort of independent personality and acted for him as living men. Mrs. Gamp, for example, used to converse with him in the church. Similarly, the characters of the French comedy writer, De Curel, assumed a real individuality

for him, and the writer left them free to act and live as in a dream.[43] No doubt these are exceptional cases from which one cannot generalize. But they make us understand how deeply rooted imagination is in human mentality, and how long the primitive survives in the human soul.

It seems to me—if I may add a consideration here—that human spiritual evolution progresses from a maximum to a minimum of imagination. It seems that the path of history leads mankind from fantasy to reason, from a mythical to a logical condition. Perhaps progress consists in getting rid of that overwhelming power of fantasy, which seems to dominate children and primitive peoples.

In conclusion, the only way to explain, on the one hand, the absence of stage machinery and scenery, and on the other, the function of visions in the mysteries, is to consider the mystery as a sort of imaginary, collective drama, consisting chiefly in visions which led the initiates, prepared by myths and carried away by symbols, images and songs, to the after-life.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE ORPHIC PALINGENESIS

So far I have not dealt particularly with Orphism. My aim has been rather to make a general survey of the imaginative world of the primitive Greeks and of the ecstatic nature of the mysteries. Orphism was, to be sure, an element in this general picture, but now we must single it out for special consideration.

A correct understanding of any mystery whatever must begin with its myth. The mystic process itself is closely connected with the myth and is largely controlled by it. We have seen how closely vision and theology, or mythology, are linked together, and before we proceed to examine a similar connection between myth and palingenesis, I think it is advisable now to consider the myth itself as a proper point of departure for any inquiry into the essence of Orphism.

It is not necessary to repeat the well-known Orphic myth of the death of Zagreus, who was killed by Titans and restored to life. There is no doubt that Orphism laid the greatest emphasis on this myth. According to an Orphic tradition, it was Onomacritus, the famous Orphic theologian of Athens during the age of Peisistratus and a leading figure in the history of Orphism, who took the story of the Titans from the

Homeric poems, and who first introduced the Dionysiac mysteries relating how Dionysus had been torn in pieces by Titans.[1]

Another tradition said that not Onomacritus but Orpheus himself introduced the death of Dionysus into the mysteries, and Diodorus adds that what the Orphic poems related was in agreement with what was revealed in the Orphic mysteries.[2] Clement of Alexandria, disclosing the symbols revealed in the Orphic mysteries, adds that these symbols referred to the death of Dionysus.[3] Another tradition maintained that Orpheus had introduced a new mystery according to which Dionysus had been born again as son of Semele.[4] In other words, there is no doubt that the death and resurrection of Zagreus formed the pivot of the whole Orphic mystery.

The entire Orphic liturgy, so far as the evidence goes, was derived from the Zagreus myth, and bore its stamp. The rite of dressing in the skin of a kid[5] was intended to recall and imitate the death of Dionysus, who was often imagined as a kid in accordance with the myth that Zeus had transformed him into a kid in order to save him from Hera's wrath.[6] It seems that the cruel human sacrifices which appear to have been a peculiarity of the Dionysiac religion, are to be connected with the death of Dionysus, which came to be transferred to the victim; hence the name of Omestes, that is, "devourer of raw flesh," given to Dionysus.[7] A red-figured vase in the British Museum

shows a Thracian who is devouring a child before Dionysus [8]—without doubt a ritual painting referring to Dionysiac sacrifices. The goats, which at Potnia were sacrificed to Dionysus, were believed to be substitutes for the former human sacrifices of children.

All this leads to the conclusion that the myth of the death of Dionysus was the cornerstone of the Orphic mystery. In other words, the Orphic mystery consisted in an imitation or repetition of the Dionysiac myth. About this point we have two important statements. The first one comes from Stephanus of Byzantium, who says that at Agra, where the so-called Lesser mysteries were celebrated, an enactment of the deeds of Dionysus took place.[9] Another statement is furnished by Firmicus Maternus, who says that the Cretan Dionysiac mysteries consisted in an exact repetition of everything the child Dionysus had done and suffered.[10] Some Eleusinian rites point to the same notion. For instance, the initiate was obliged to fast nine days because, according to the myth, Demeter did likewise when she was searching for her daughter. They broke the fast by drinking *kykeon,* a special concoction, because the same event occurred in the myth concerning the goddess.[11] The initiates wandered about with torches in their hands in remembrance of Demeter when she wandered throughout the world searching for Persephone.[12] The Orphic liturgy of Pompeii shows a young man looking into a glass just as, according to the Orphic legend, Dionysus did.

All this points to the idea that the very aim of the

mystery was to repeat the divine life. What does that mean? Plutarch paves the way to a clearer understanding. He says that the myth of the sufferings of Dionysus was intended for a palingenesis.[13] In other words, the aim of this repetition of the divine life was to make it possible for men to be born again through the death and resurrection of the god. The *isotheos physis* (the god-like nature) was the chief end of ancient mysteries. In the mysteries of Isis, according to Apuleius, the neophyte was dressed in the so-called Olympiaca stola, a symbol of apotheosis, and crowned. He stood in front of the statue of Isis with a torch in his hand and was adored as a god.[14] A golden Orphic leaflet states that the initiate has become similar to god.[15] The divine nature attained by virtue of imitation was sometimes expressed by the new name attributed to the neophyte, which was nothing but the name of the deity herself. For instance, the Dionysiac neophytes were called *bakchoi,* the Cybelian neophytes, *kybeboi.*[16] This custom reminds us of the primitive habit of calling a person possessed by a god by the name of the god, who is believed to be embodied in him.[17]

This communion with god was considered, according to primitive realistic beliefs, as a material event achieved only by material means. In other words, the divine nature was believed to be attained only by impersonating the divine life. Hence is derived the idea which is of primary importance for a correct understanding of the mysteries, that communion with god may be at-

tained by imitating the divine life. This divine life is nothing but a myth, except that this myth is believed to be true; in other words, it becomes history. The myth of Heracles can be regarded as the life of a hero, not unlike the life of Napoleon, on condition that everything the myth tells is believed to be actually true. The distinction between myth and history did not exist at all for the Greeks. Hence their imaginative conception of history. They considered myths as true accounts. Hence the possibility of entering into practical intimacy with persons who, in our opinion, never existed.

This point of view explains those Greek mystery rites, which consisted in the imitation of certain deeds attributed in the myth to the deity; for instance, as said above, to be torn in pieces like Dionysus, to drink the *kykeon,* to wander about bearing torches. Hence the imitation of the life of Osiris enacted in the Egyptian mysteries, and the belief that, by enacting the death and resurrection of Osiris, the dead god, himself, will actually be resurrected.[18] Hence the funeral pantomimes, wherein the widow impersonated Isis, her son, Horus, and the friends, Anubis and Tot, which went to such extremes that the body of the dead was torn in pieces in order to imitate as fully as possible Osiris' fate.[19] During the processions of Isis, one of the priests bore the mask and the name of Anubis, whom he was believed to embody. Such a priest is represented in a statue in the Vatican Museum.[20] Most probably the same meaning is expressed by certain Roman statues repre-

senting a soldier or a magistrate with a heraldic rod and an Anubis head.[21]

This rite of imitating gods was very common in classic civilization. Some early Roman agrarian dances were executed by dancers with red-painted faces, in order to imitate Priapus, whose face the Romans used to paint with red color.[22] And the Roman generals used to paint their faces red during the triumph in order to imitate Jupiter Capitolinus, whose statue was also painted red.[23]

In the last analysis the Eucharist consists essentially of the same thing; by acting like the Savior, in other words, by eating bread and drinking wine as he did, Christians come into intimacy with him and attain communion with God.

This communion, which I would call mimetic communion, because it is attained not by spiritual means but by a material imitation of the divine deeds, is very common among primitive peoples. It is based on the notion that an event can be produced by means of imitation. Hence the magic hunting dances which are believed to bring real success by the dramatic performance of a hunt of bisons or kangaroos. From this idea is derived the primitive mimetic communion. Indians, Eskimos, Polynesians, Australians, perform certain dances, the subjects of which are the deeds of their ancestors.[24] They really mean a communion with the ancestors. And the actor who represents the ancestor wears his mask and his clothes; and thus the ancestor is believed to be

present with his beloved tribe. The Japanese are accustomed to enact certain mysteries consisting chiefly in the reproduction of the sayings and doings attributed by tradition to an ancestor or to the deity. Very often the actor, who is a priest, falls into an hypnotic trance, during which in all good faith he simulates this personage. The audience, which attends the performance, believes unquestionably that the gods or the ancestors speak through the actors.[25] The Brahmans, who enact the Indian sacred dramas, are believed to embody the gods they represent.[26] The children who take part in the Indian sacred dramas are believed to be the gods themselves.[27]

But now another problem arises: taking for granted that the mystery was a mimic communion through which actors came in touch with Dionysus and shared his divine nature, we must admit the possibility of a collective imitative communion for the same reason that we had to assume the possibility of collective visions. A communion limited to the priests could never supply us with a satisfactory explanation of the mysteries, because the spiritual upheaval experienced by the initiates in sharing in the ceremonies could never arise from it.

How can we explain the fact that from a dramatic communion, wherein the communion was really limited to the actors, there arose a collective communion shared by the entire audience? I imagine the belief that the actors embodied divine beings and somehow themselves

became divine, in other words, the deep impression made by the real presence of gods and heroes (which is difficult for us to realize) conveyed to the audience a complex of feelings, emotions and terrors which we cannot fully recover.

In this way the divine drama became an episode in everyone's life. The audience shared in the sorrows and glories of heroes and gods; human lives became one with the lives of gods or heroes. During the performances, to take an instance from the Persian *Tazieh,* a sort of national Persian drama dealing with the story of Hussein and his family, the entire audience suffers with the actors, or better, with the heroes in the actors; the spectators become one with them; they are fellow-sufferers rather than spectators.

I imagine that something similar happened in Greece in the first period of tragedy, especially in Æschylian tragedy. We are told that the *Eumenides* inspired such fear in the audience that pregnant women were delivered during the performance. I believe that some such deep impression must have been connected with the feeling of the real presence of divine beings. At any rate Greek audiences were far more sensitive than our own and shared in the performance with a childish naïveté which now only very simple people occasionally feel.

Lucian tells us that once during a pantomime the actor who represented the frenzy of Ajax became frenzied and snatched away the flute from the hands of the player, tore in pieces the dress of another player

and almost wounded and killed the actor who was impersonating Odysseus, when, according to his part, he boasted of his victory. And Lucian tells us that the whole audience forgot that the thing was a pantomime and followed the actor's frenzy, crying and throwing their clothes into the air.[28]

These instances solve our present problem. There is no doubt that the Greeks shared in the theatrical emotions with a violence and a depth which are for us quite unintelligible. Lucian says that the inhabitants of the cities of the Pontus and of Ionia used to attend the Dionysiac performances for days, and that very often prominent citizens used to share in the bacchic dances.[29] He says, too, that the inhabitants of Abdera were attacked by a sort of ecstatic mania, which made them recite and cry in the streets sayings and fragments of tragedies, especially of the Euripidean *Andromeda*.[30]

But I must admit that all these instances, however impressive they may be, cannot give a fully satisfactory solution to our present problem, which involves the question of the possibility of real collective communion. The history of religions furnishes us many striking examples of this peculiar phenomenon. The diffusion of Christianity among primitive negro tribes brought a peculiar sort of collective communion, during which people, especially women, fell suddenly into a sorrowful ecstasy attributed to a sort of infernal god believed to have been an ancestor. During these ecstatic trances people were believed to come in touch with the god,

who was being worshiped with dances, songs and sacrifices. Sometimes this ecstatic epidemic invaded entire villages.[31]

Another instance of collective communion is furnished by the history of French Protestantism. After the abnegation of the Edict of Nantes, a sort of religious sect arose among the Protestants, called *Trembleurs des Cevennes.* The *Trembleurs* used to meet in secret places and there perform their rites. Afterward one after the other fell to the ground and prophesied, pretending to be imbued with the Spirit. The number of these prophets was many thousands.[32] Another instance: in 1690 a mystic epidemic broke out in France among the Calvinists and about three hundred persons were seized with prophetic frenzy.[33] In Russia there exists, or existed a few years ago, a sect whose members claim to be identical with Christ, and worship each other. All this leads us to conclude that we can most assuredly admit the possibility of a collective communion.

Now another question arises: How are we to imagine a mimetic communion? No doubt it cannot consist in an ordinary theatrical performance, where the words and actions have been fixed beforehand, because nothing would stand in sharper contrast with the very notion of a communion than the idea of a predetermined drama. We may admit that an actor, especially a primitive actor, thought himself in all good faith to be no longer Mr. *So-and-So,* but an ancestor, a hero or a

god, and that he considered his recital as a repetition of the doings and sayings attributed by him or by a sacred tradition to the personage. But we cannot admit that in the very moment when he feels himself another person gifted with divine powers and passions, fighting against monsters, performing miracles, this man should be obliged to remember word for word, gesture for gesture, the part of his hero which he had memorized. I find there an inner contradiction, which leads me to exclude the possibility that the mimetic communion could have consisted in a dramatic performance. In this case, taking for granted that I am right, there is no room for anything but a *pantomime,* not a pantomime in our modern sense, and certainly nothing like the modern ballet. Here we must try to see with primitive eyes and to realize the points of difference between us and primitive people, especially the different functions of gesture. For us gesture has a very limited function; our language is more and more freeing itself from its connections with gesticulation. We do not think of gesture as a normal means by which to express our thoughts; our whole education tends to create in us a great antipathy to gesticulation; the more well-bred a man is, the less freely he gesticulates. Abundant gesticulation is, in general opinion, a privilege of lower classes and races.

I do not mean to deny that the spontaneous evolution of human mentality tends to minimize the functions of gesture. I am willing to admit that this process is closely related to the history of our thought itself.

But I assert that, at any rate, history has developed in us a certain incapacity for understanding the essence of primitive gesture. In order to be able to recapture its real content, we must remember what part imagination plays in the primitive mentality, and especially what its function is in primitive thought. Summarizing my idea, I would say that modern man thinks through concepts, and primitive man thinks through images. Primitive thought is ignorant of what we call general, abstract concepts. In other words, primitive languages do not refer at all to *ideas* but to *things;* and consist, therefore, not in concepts but in images.

There is, for instance, no primitive verb *to be.* Primitive language cannot express the general, abstract idea of existence, but only points to concrete existing things, which exist either here or there, either in my home or in the sea, either on the top of a mountain or in a cottage, and so on. Similarly, no word expresses the general concept of movement. Primitive languages point only to particular movements either in the air or in the sea, either towards the sky or towards the valley, and so on.[84] The general concept of resting does not exist at all in primitive languages, but only a number of words relating to particular resting things or beings.

From these instances are derived what German philologists call *Lautbilder,* that is, sounds which entail images. Hence primitive language appears as a complex not of words in the modern meaning of the word, but of pictorial concepts, to use Professor Gatschet's expres-

sion, the number of which is unlimited, for the same reason that, though we assign to a language a definite number of words, we cannot assign to imagination a definite number of images. The multiplication of these pictorial concepts can reach astonishing proportions. To give an instance: the tribes of Tierra del Fuego have ten thousand verbal forms for the various types of movements alone.

Now, granted that the primitive mind deals not in concepts but in images, there is no doubt that these images might be expressed through gestures as well as through words. The superiority of words as compared with gestures, which leads us to get rid of them as much as possible and to use words instead, is due to the fact that our minds are being freed more and more from their ballast of images, and are tending towards more and more logical forms of thought. But from the viewpoint of primitive mentality, there is no doubt that gestures may appear as better tools than words, because an image can be suggested and conveyed through a gesture better than through a word. That is why people endowed with a rich imagination, southern Italians, for instance, gesticulate more than other people more richly gifted with practical and logical qualities.

For primitive men, therefore, gesture was a sort of spontaneous language. And many scholars think that in a very primitive stage of evolution gesture was the only human language, mankind having not yet reached

what, properly speaking, was a language, and that from gesture was derived a complex of pictorial sounds, which gave rise at last to language.[35]

At any rate, there is no doubt that the language of gestures is still in existence among many primitive tribes. This primitive gesticulation has nothing in common with our gesticulation. It consists in a complex of symbols which evoke images. In other words, it derives from a sort of unconscious agreement, thanks to which everybody is aware of what every sign means, more or less. It traces in the air the symbols of things, summarized images, which, whether by themselves or in conjunction with other images, suggest one or more things.

To take an instance, the gesture of the boomerang means by itself the Australian weapon, but in connection with other gestures it may signify to hunt with a boomerang, to kill with a boomerang, and so on. Another gesture means, by itself, the water, but in connection with other signs it may point to thirst, or to drink water, and so on. Gesticulation appears, in a word, quite similar to a language, whose words, notwithstanding their having a meaning of their own, acquire other meanings and point to other lines of thought by virtue of their association with other words.

This pictorial language is very common among primitive tribes, especially among Indian tribes, owing to the enormous variety of idioms, which sometimes makes it impossible for men belonging to different tribes to com-

municate with each other. Besides, some primitive people, some South American and Australian tribes, for instance, often used to pray only by gestures. Some scholars consider as a remnant of a primitive gesticulated prayer, the complicated ritual gesticulation, which sometimes is required by primitive prayers. Moreover, everyone will admit that the gesticulation required by orthodox and catholic liturgies bears a strict resemblance to a sacred pantomime.

All this explains the origin of sacred gesticulated performances. For instance, in India some festivals of Brahma are solemnized with mimic recitals of sacred stories; there is no dialogue at all. The story, well known to all the people, is represented by means of a series of mimic scenes.[36] In the fifth century A.D., people used to recite pantomimes in the churches, representing the magic adoration, the miracle of Cana, the crucifixion.[37] In France, mimic mysteries were often performed. A chronicler says about a mimic Passion mystery played in 1437 in Paris: "The persons who performed it spoke no word, but they showed it by way of the mystery-play; and they played very well and met with great favor." Elsewhere it is said about a mimic mystery of the Nativity played at Paris in 1431: "From the bridge to the second gate of St. Denis Street there were representations, not spoken at all, of the birth of the Virgin, of her marriage and of the three Magi, of the Innocents, and of the Savior; and these personages were played full well." Another chronicler

says, speaking of a mystery of Gideon's life, played at Arras in 1455, which the Duke of Bourgogne found near the Tuileries and the little market: "The whole life of Gideon with living persons who said no word, but only made the signs of the above-named mystery." [38]

But let us return to the Greeks. What we know about the Greek mimicry entitles us to consider it from a quite primitive point of view. Perhaps no other feature of Greek culture conveys to us such a vivid impression of primitiveness. The terms used by Greeks speaking of it make us understand how near Greek mimics stood to primitive mimics. The usual expression is "to speak with the hands," or "to dance with the hands." [39] An epigram of the Anthology mentions the hands of the famous mime, Pylades, "which said everything." [40]

One point is here of primary importance: exactly what did the word dance mean for the Greeks? Dance and mimicry were somehow one and the same thing. Greek dances had nothing in common with ours; they were not recreations nor forms of social entertainment. Greek dancing was very near to primitive dancing, which always has a mimic character. To speak with the hands, or to dance with the hands (a phrase which means absolutely nothing to us), was the same thing. Of Pylades the epigram, referred to above, says that he danced with his hands.[41] Plutarch says that the dance was able not only to imitate shapes and to express ideas, but also to expound feelings and to evoke things.[42] Longus relates the story of a shepherd who by means of

the *epilenios* dance (which was a sort of ecstatic dance) represented the harvesting of the fruits, the squeezing of the grapes, the filling of the vats, and the drinking of the wine.[43] Another mime of the age of Nero was able to expound by dancing the love of Ares and Aphrodite, how Apollo revealed the adultery to Hephæstus, how he trapped both the guilty gods in his net in the presence of the other gods, the shame of Aphrodite, and the prayers of Ares.[44]

The ancient pantomime consisted in a successive evocation of every person in turn, passing from one to another (for instance, either from Athamas to Ino, or from Atreus to Thyestes, and from Thyestes to Ægisthus) according to the myth.[45] Libanius explains how one person called forth the other, and says that in this mutual evocation consisted the difficulty of the task. "To think of Athena," he says, "when one is playing Athena, or to think of Poseidon when Poseidon is played, is nothing difficult; but to show Poseidon through Athena, or Ares through Hephæstus, or Zeus through Ganymedes, or Paris through Achilles, that is what strikes the soul." Thus the mimic drama unrolled itself, passing from one evocation to another. Libanius assumes that the audience viewed not only Deianira but also the river and Heracles and Nessus; not only Daphne but also Apollo persecuting her; and near to Phædra the audience saw Hippolytus; and so on.[46]

This evocation was accomplished by means of symbolic gestures, a sort of sign language. Libanius says

that there were different gestures for men and for gods.[47] Sometimes it happened that the actor, excited by the recital, passed without being aware of it from one person to another (for instance, from Kronos, who is devouring his children, to Thyestes, who is unwittingly feasting on the flesh of his children; or from Semele, burnt by the lightnings of Zeus, to Glauke, burnt by the fatal gift of Medea),[48] just as when a man in speaking mistakes one word for another.

A good illustration of these mimic performances are the mimic speeches which preachers hold before deaf mutes. Professor Tylor assumes that no one can see a valuable teacher of mimetic art recite the parable of the shepherd and the ninety-nine sheep without realizing that for some simple and ingenious stories like that, gesticulation is more expressive than language.[49]

To return to the mysteries, we must note particularly the fact that ancient traditions and writers always considered mimetic dances and mysteries as closely connected with each other. The Orphics asserted that the mystery dances had been invented by Orpheus, who was believed to have been an excellent dancer.[50] Dionysus was called *Enorchès* because the dances played a great part in the Orphic mysteries.[51] According to Athenæus, people used to reproduce at Sparta, by means of dances, the Indian expedition and the story of Pentheus.[52] Lucian says that there was no mystery at all without a dance, and that all Dionysiac ceremonies were nothing but dances.[53]

In other words, the mystery and the dance had something in common. The way to ecstasy was the dance; by means of mimic dances the initiates reproduced the deeds of the god and entered into communion with him. On the whole, the mystery was nothing but a magic dance, if we understand the word dance in the light of Greek mentality. It was, in a word, a sacramental pantomime.

The history of religions furnishes some instances of these sacramental dances. The *Acts of Saint John* tells us that Christ, before being delivered to the Jews, gathered his disciples together and danced with them. He says, "The grace dances. I want to play the flute, let us dance. The twelfth number dances above. Everyone who does not dance does not know what happens. Amen." Elsewhere Christ says: "Listening to me during the dance, you look at yourselves. Everyone who dances understands what I am doing." There is no doubt that this dance led to ecstasies connected with visions, and that therefore it was considered a sort of superior knowledge. They were told to form a circle, holding each other by the hands, and Christ was in the center and began to sing a hymn.[54]

Perhaps Clement of Alexandria is alluding to these early Christian dances when he contrasts the Dionysiac orgies with the Christian joys. It seems that he points to some sacred Christian dances which ought to be preferred to the Bacchic orgies.[55]

How are we now to consider this mimetic communion

from the purely psychological point of view? Without doubt as a change of personality. It is quite possible that the normal personality is, by means of hypnotic or magnetic suggestion, succeeded by another quite different imaginary personality, which becomes for some length of time the unique, living, real personality. It is suggested to the person, for instance, that he is a country woman. He gets up, walks slowly and heavily, leads the cow out of the stable, resists the crude advances of a young man. But afterwards, by suggestion, the same person becomes an actress, and he (or "she") begins to speak shockingly, she criticizes her gowns because they are too long, flirts with her lover. A short time afterward, the same person is no longer an actress but a general, and speaks with a hard and military accent, observes the enemy with his telescope, orders a charge, admires the courage of the soldiers, takes his sword, and is wounded. Now, the general transforms himself into a priest, and speaks with a sweet voice, converses with another priest, blesses the children, kneels down and prays. But the priest has been succeeded by a pastry cook, who bows to his customers, receives orders, disputes with a policeman. At last as a boy the poor man goes to school with his books under his arm, and brings with him his little lunch and jests and plays.[56]

Such a change of personality can refer not only to imaginary persons, but also to historical persons. It is quite possible to substitute for the self of an average

man a Napoleon, or a Dante, or a Cæsar, viewed as he thinks they really were. There are no limits to this change of personality: not only the voice, the accent and the gestures change, but the writing itself.[57] Looking at himself in a mirror the person under suggestion no longer sees his usual image but the imaginary personality which has been forced upon him. A man who thinks himself a monkey will see in a looking-glass not himself but a monkey. If the newly imposed personality suffers, this imaginary suffering is felt as a real sensation; if it dies, the man will die.

An interesting account which shows that there is no limit to suggestive personalities is given by Charles Tout, who was ordered to become his father, who had died some years before of an illness. In a moment, Mr. Tout began to feel the symptoms of this disease and to suffer dreadfully; he was obliged to lie down on the floor; a pillow was put under his head and he felt a little better, but he was not able to understand whether he was himself or his father. He remembered afterwards having been one and the same with his father, and that he had been dying in the same way that his father had died, going through the same suffering, even looking like his father. And there is no doubt that he would really have died, had not the experiment been interrupted.[58]

Spiritualism furnishes striking instances of this blend of two personalities, which cannot be distinguished from each other. A famous medium, Madame

d'Esperance, describes in an impressive way her feeling of uncertainty as to her real personality. She doubts whether her hands belonged to her or to Anna, her other suggested personality, and whether she or Anna had been weeping.[59]

Other instances are afforded by the medieval devil possessions, in which persons believed themselves to be forced by the devil to speak and act against their wills and their consciences. Other instances are found in stigmatism, a religious mania very common in former times, consisting in the substitution of Christ for normal persons, who spoke and acted like Christ, according to the Gospels or to the traditions, and believed themselves to be crucified, suffering all the tortures of a real crucifixion, without being in a position to get rid of this terrible imaginary self.[60]

Primitive peoples furnish many instances for our present purpose. It often happens that people believe themselves to be possessed by the dead, or by diabolical spirits, and speak with other voices and act quite contrary to their normal character.[61]

As said above, the imaginary life cannot be distinguished from the real life. The real world is replaced by a fantastic world none the less concrete. The hallucination becomes reality. The eyes follow an imaginary bird, which is flying away in the sky, and the pupil behaves as though following a real bird; an imaginary object observed with a telescope appears enlarged like a real object; if the eye is pressed with the finger a

double image is seen precisely as in the case of real things.[62] To give a striking instance of this identification of real and suggestive worlds, Dr. Bernheim by suggestion once made a young girl believe that she held a rose in one hand and then put a real rose in her other hand. The girl realized that there were two roses, one in each hand, but she was not able to state which rose was the real one.[63]

This substitution of personality brings with it a quite new life. Mary Reynolds, for instance, fell asleep and after a time awoke with another personality. She no longer knew the members of her family; she was ignorant of her home and country; she did not know the names of the most familiar things; she could not write or read; she was obliged to start anew her entire education.[64] The Reverend Hanna was the victim of an unfortunate accident and fainted away. He was brought home and when he recovered he was like a baby. He knew nothing; he was not able to eat. He was incapable of judging colors, distances, perspectives. One day he wanted to seize a tree; another day he ate a piece of soap. He had to be educated again.[65] This passing from the usual life to a new life is the pivot of certain primitive initiations, which consist in a mystic or suggestive death marking a departure for another life.

About the sincerity of this death and of the new life no serious doubt can arise. The whole behavior of the neophytes points to a really new existence. They remember nothing; they know nothing; they are no longer

able to speak or to eat or to drink; they do not know the names of the most common objects. For instance, after the initiation the young negroes of Liberia become like babies; they do not remember their parents, themselves, or their names. The neophytes of New Guinea must be nursed by their mothers or by other women because they can no longer eat by themselves.[66]

The starting point of this new life is most logically a suggested death, which is believed to be a quite real one. The young Challams of Australia are obliged, when they have reached the age of initiation, to remain for three days and three nights in a mysterious cottage surrounded by the whole tribe, singing and dancing. They are believed to die and they actually look dead when they are taken out. They are afterwards put into fresh water and then recover as new beings.[67] The Arunta believe that during the initiation the spirits Iruntarinia pierce the tongue and body of the neophytes, whom they are told to bring into a grotto, where their bowels are replaced with other organs and with certain stones. They are afterwards recalled to life again.[68] The Mitakodi neophytes in Australia believe they have been killed and thrown into a ditch of water, where they remain four days; afterwards they are surrounded with a great fire and they think they have returned to life a second time.[69] The Bimbinga and the Unmatiera believe that all these operations are executed by a god himself.[70] The Ambamba used to bury the initiates in a forest where they are said to have remained many years, then

to have been resurrected.[71] The Omaha bind the neophytes to tree trunks and kill them; afterwards they come to life again.[72]

About the sincerity of the neophytes there is no room for doubt, as said above. Although they know perfectly well that they will not die, in the usual meaning of the word, they are perfectly honest when they pretend to be reborn. This is a point of basic importance. And it is very easy to admit the reality of this new life, once all these things have been considered in the light of primitive mentality. I wish to repeat what I have repeatedly said, that the identification of imagination with reality is necessary to a true valuation of the primitive, mystic, new birth.

Let us now take a further step. What is the line of discrimination between this new life and a spontaneous or unconscious pantomime? Why could we not speak of a spontaneous or, if you prefer, suggestive pantomime instead of speaking of a new life? As a matter of fact there is no doubt that from a psychological standpoint no distinction exists between the two phenomena. The Reverend Hanna, who played and jested as a child, might appear to anyone who is ignorant of his psychological state as a first-rate actor or mimic. The Australian or negro neophytes who behave like children may be considered by one ignorant of their psychology as skilled comedians. And, indeed, some scholars do not hesitate at all to assume that the whole new birth claimed by these tribes is nothing but a comedy.

If we go back to the main phenomenon of the substitution of personality, and the suggestive pantomime, they will appear to us, properly speaking, one and the same thing. The young lady who behaves like an actress, the young man who behaves like a general, are nothing but perfect actors, whose perfection derives from the fact that they are actually these persons. In other words, they do not recite at all, they live.

Professor Janet describes the behavior of a subject during the suggested episodes of her hallucinations. He describes the girl at the moment when she thinks that she is seasick, falls into the sea and reaches an island by swimming, shivering from the cold; and, he concludes, it was a perfect comedy.[73]

Another striking instance is given by some spiritualist experiments made with the French medium, Helene Smith, who impersonated numerous persons. One of these was an imaginary Indian princess, the wife of an Indian prince. When her husband died, she was obliged, in accordance with the Indian custom, to be burned with him; she was accompanied to the burning pyre and threw herself into the fire. Professor Jastrow describes her at the moment when, after casting away her bracelets, necklaces and earrings, she ascended the pyre, her expression a tragic blend of terror and composure. The description could apply perfectly to a great actress.[74]

Other instances are furnished by the stigmatists. One of them, Louise Lateau, was scientifically examined by Professor Despine, who describes the wonderful ex-

pression of her face when, at the end of her ecstasy, she was crucified with Christ. He depicts her attitudes and gestures during the whole series of her hallucinations: how she expressed joy and then sorrow; how she followed with her eyes and with her head the movements of persons and processions; how she described, without being aware of it, everything which her imagination saw by means of gestures, smiles, weeping, cries, movements, and so on, just like a skillful actress.[75]

In conclusion, I wish to recall some experiments of collective suggestions made by the Belgian hypnotist, D'Hont. He used to suggest to an entire audience a series of particular events or situations, which centered around a pivotal imaginary fact, and everyone shared in accordance with his own character. Once he transformed the whole audience into an electoral meeting; the candidate made his speech, the audience applauded, the adversary replied, and the meeting ended in a general fight in which they exchanged blows and injured one another quite seriously.[76]

The results of all these considerations may be summarized as follows: the Orphic mystery centered about the Orphic myth and consisted in a reproduction of the mythical story of Dionysus, leading to an identification of the initiates with the deity. This reproduction consisted in a mimetic communion by which the divine nature was attained in a real divine life, which marked a starting point for a new life, or for a mystic palingenesis.

## CHAPTER V

## THE ORPHIC CREED

I have tried to explain the mimetic character of the mystery drama, and to prove that it consisted in a spontaneous, imitative performance through which the initiates entered into communion with the divine being and were born anew. Now I shall proceed with an inquiry into the theological and mystical implications of this new life.

Consider again the Orphic myth. What was the link between the Orphic mystery and the Orphic myth? As I have repeatedly stated, the Zagreus myth narrates how mankind arose from the ashes of the Titans, struck by the lightning of Zeus. From the murder committed by the Titans, the whole of mankind inherits a sort of original sin,[1] from which each soul must be purged. But the soul is a prisoner for some length of time in the body and can escape and rejoin the original divine essence only by death.[2] It is possible, however, to anticipate this reunion, without being obliged to await death, by virtue of the mystery, which temporarily delivers the soul from its bodily prison, and brings it into touch with the divine essence.[3] It is not surprising that the mystery can somehow be a substitute for death, because both of them are "ecstatic" experiences, although in dif-

ferent degrees. Both of them consist in an egress of the soul from the body, with this difference only, that death delivers the soul permanently and the mystery temporarily.[4] Hence the great importance of the initiation, considered as an anticipation of the final catharsis, death, and as the unique path which leads man during his life to the knowledge of things which he would otherwise know only in death.

The initiation was supposed to make man a new creature, who enjoyed the privilege of knowing divine things which the average man might attain only in the after-life. This great privilege gave him the feeling of having been endowed somehow with a new essence, of being a sort of superhuman being. This opinion was shared by the general community. Diodorus says that the initiate was more pious and just and in everything better than other people.[5] Cicero says that he lived joyfully, having truly understood the principles of life.[6] Hence the duty of purifying one's self in order to become worthy of this particular destiny. In fact the demand for chastity was one of the most prominent features of Orphism and is expressed in Orphic hymns with an astonishing emphasis.[7] There is no doubt that this longing for purity, which sounds quite alien to the average Greek spirit, was not the product of a late stage of evolution, but was already in full swing in the fifth century B.C. The Euripidean tragedy *Hippolytus* furnishes a striking instance of Orphic asceticism in the person of Hippolytus, whom Euripides

represents as an initiate.[8] Undoubtedly Euripides had no personal reasons for glorifying Orphism, since his sceptic philosophy led him along quite different lines of thought. But he could have written no more stirring defense of Orphism had he been accepted into the Orphic fellowship. Another testimony, which owing to its particular character requires more than ordinary consideration, is contained in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, which refers to the Eleusinian mysteries, but might in this particular respect apply also to Orphism. The initiates, who dance and sing in Elysium, all claim that Orpheus taught them to abstain from homicide and to be pious equally toward their country-men and toward strangers.[9] Nothing more: only a brief hint. But what a huge difference is disclosed by these few words between Orphic ethics and the ethics of the Greeks! We have nothing better than this humorous allusion of Aristophanes, who considered the initiations only as a good opportunity for fun, to bring us face to face with the chief and distinguishing feature of Orphism, its new mentality. In fact no Greek had ever considered it his duty to behave piously toward strangers. The Greeks distinguished between Greeks, on the one hand, and *barbaroi,* on the other, and assumed that the *barbaroi* were born in order to serve the Greeks. This theory of the natural right of the Greeks to master and rule other peoples and to consider them as lower races, is asserted by Aristotle.[10]

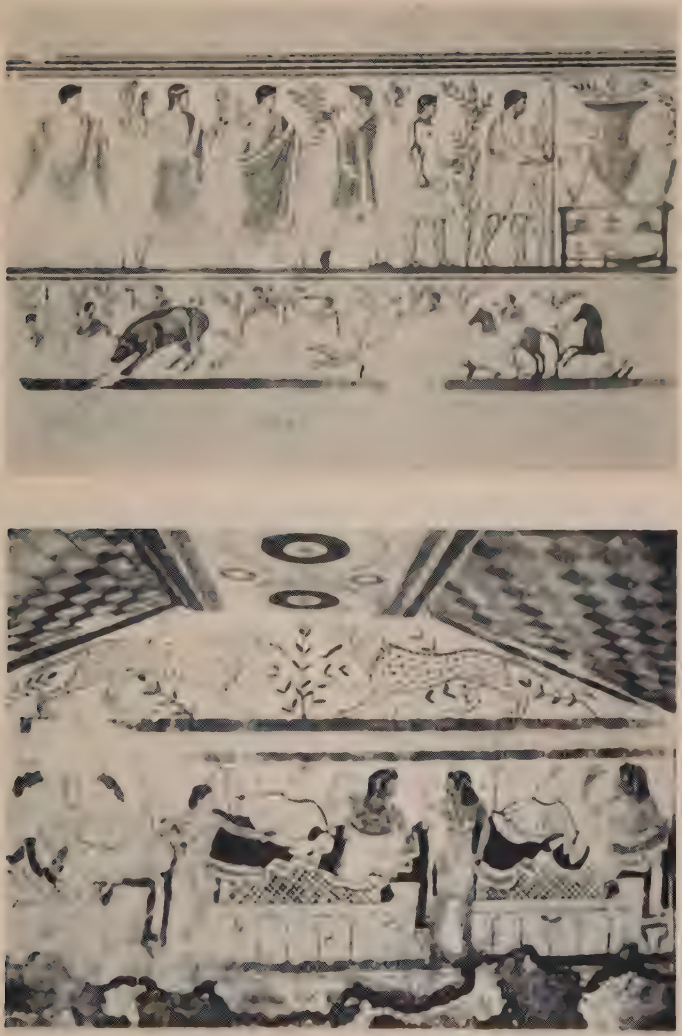
I think it is unnecessary to spend more time in show-

ing that Orphism was without doubt the forerunner of a gigantic ethical upheaval. The Orphic was a new creature. He had some particular duties in this life and he enjoyed a particular blessedness in the life to come. In accordance with the belief that his blessedness was the consequence of a sacramental act and that it depended strictly upon this act, the Orphic creed was very precise on this point. Like Catholicism, and for the same reason, Orphism assumed that there was no possibility of blessedness in the after-life except through the initiation, and that no merit or virtue or faith could be substituted for the initiation.

Blessedness in the hereafter was a privilege strictly limited to the initiates.[11] The most ancient document on this point is the hymn to Demeter, wherein it is said that only one who has viewed the sacred ceremonies will be blessed in the after-life.[12]

Theories concerning the nature of the after-life varied according to the different levels of culture. Some doctrines, evidently affected by philosophical abstractions, asserted that the Orphic became like the gods and dwelt with the gods [13] and the heroes in the sky,[14] or passed on to other lives.[15] But the general and common belief bore the stamp of the Greek tendency to realism and conceived the after-life as a series of earthly joys, such as music, banqueting, merry-making, conversation and so on.

A prominent feature of the Orphic blessedness was that everyone continued in his own habits and ways.



Two Etruscan wall paintings. The upper shows a dance of the blessed in a garden; the lower, a banquet of the blessed. These are striking illustrations of the influence exerted in Etruria by the Orphic ideas of the after-life.

Two Etruscan wall paintings, showing (above) a chariot race, and (below) a hunting and fishing scene. They illustrate the extent to which realistic notions of the after-life were carried by the Etruscans.

I have already shown explicitly that this conception bears a close resemblance to primitive notions: in the Orphic Katabasis of the eleventh book of the Odyssey the dead warriors bear their arms and show the wounds received during earthly battles; Minos is a judge in the after-life as before; Orion is still a great hunter, Achilles a vigorous warrior. The funereal relief of the initiated schoolmaster, Hieronymus, represents the dead seated in the presence of the infernal gods, and the inscription explains that because of his skill in teaching he has been appointed the master of the initiates.[16] At any rate, this primitive, crude realism soon gave place to more refined ideas, which very often testify to a rich imagination. No color seemed sufficient to do justice to the great beauty of the world of the dead. Pindar depicts the brilliant sunshine which illumines the world of the dead and describes the purple-colored meadows, overshadowed by trees bearing golden fruit. And the blessed amuse themselves with horses or play the lyre. And a sweet perfume is wafted on the air, and on the altars of the gods numerous victims are burnt by the splendid fire. For the good, life is carefree day and night and they do not trouble the earth or the waves of the sea with the work of their hands, longing for food; everyone who has remained innocent spends his time without tears in the presence of the infernal gods.[17] According to the pseudo-Platonic dialogue, entitled *Axiochus,* the blessed enjoy every sort of fruit; there are springs of clear water and

meadows adorned with flowers, conversation of philosophers, rehearsals of poets, dances, sweet perfumes, songs, banquets—no sorrow at all, a joyous life without the extremes of winter and summer, a balmy clime, radiant with the light of the sun.[18] In the same way, Vergil describes Elysium in his account of the descent of Æneas to the world of the dead, which bears evidences of kinship with the Orphic conceptions.[19]

Now we can easily understand why the Orphics had a thoroughly optimistic notion of death. Far from considering it an evil and the after-life a sorrowful condition, as most of the Greeks did, the Orphics regarded death as a benefaction, as real life.[20] If we remember how deeply the pessimistic notion of the after-life was rooted in Greek consciousness, we shall easily grasp the secret of the powerful spell exerted by Orphic ideas over Greek religious thought. As a matter of fact, I think that no religious upheaval can be compared with the revolution wrought by Orphism in the history of Greek thought.

It seems that Orphism, although its ideas of the after-life were well known, kept certain points of its doctrines secret. Euripides says in his *Bacchants* that the advantages of the Orphic religion were worthy to be believed, but were not allowed to be disclosed.[21] Plato assumes that the after-life doctrines belonged to the secret theories of the Orphics.[22] On the other hand, there is no doubt that the after-life mystery creeds were well known. It seems that the secrecy concerned

not the punishments, but the rewards. Perhaps what the common people knew and what the initiates were allowed to repeat formed only a part of the after-life blessedness promised to the initiates. At any rate, there is no doubt that the Orphic descriptions of the after-life still extant show a particular fondness for the punishments. The Orphic Katabasis of the Odyssey describes no rewards at all, but a judgment and many sinners, like Tantalus, Sisyphus and others. The vision of Er, contained in the Platonic dialogue of the *Republic,* describes the punishments with many dreadful details, but, except for a vague allusion, seems to ignore the question of rewards. According to ancient writers, the story of the Katabasis of Pythagoras dealt only with punishments.[23]

Surprisingly enough, the same tendency to emphasize the punishments and to omit the rewards can be found in art. There can be no doubt that an art existed influenced by Orphic traditions. The most famous painting of the after-life was the *Nekyia,* which Polygnotus painted in the porch of the Lesche at Delphi. The detailed description of this painting made by Pausanias [24] gives proof of the absence of any representation of rewards. Nicias, a painter of the fourth century, painted another *Nekyia* which also contained no scenes of the blessed at all, since, according to ancient writers, he followed very closely the Homeric account.[25]

Furthermore, the southern Italian vases with infernal scenes contain only punishments or other mythical

episodes connected with Hades, but no scene which might reasonably be taken to depict beatitude. And since we can assume with some degree of assurance that these vases were derived, as I said, from a Greek original, the same conclusion may apply to it.

Ancient writers, such as Demosthenes, the Greek original of the Plautine comedy *The Prisoners,* Cicero, the scholiast of Statius, Origen,[26] allude here and there to paintings showing after-life tortures and punishments, but no allusion exists to any painting of blessedness. This constant lack of descriptions or representations of the blessed cannot be accidental, and perhaps it might be explained by the existence of some secrecy regarding this aspect of the after-life.

At any rate, everything points toward the conclusion that the Orphics considered themselves exceptional beings, gifted with the privilege of a particular beatitude in the after-life. Considering the connections between ideas of the after-life and funeral rites, Orphism might be expected to have a special funeral rite to pave the way to blessedness. Evidence that this peculiar rite actually existed is furnished by an inscription found at Cumæ and now preserved in the Naples Museum, which says: Only initiates are allowed to lie here. That means, at least, that the initiates used to bury their dead in particular enclosures. Plutarch's dialogue, *On the Dæmon of Socrates,* affords us more details, within the bounds of secrecy, about the Orphic burial rites. The Pythagorean Theanor came to Thebes, sent by the

southern Italian Pythagoreans in consequence of a dream, in order to get back the body of Lysis, who had fled to Greece during the democratic revolt in southern Italy against the Pythagorean aristocracy, and had died at Thebes. Theanor was introduced by Epaminondas into the house of Simmias, and he explained his reason for such a long journey, asserting that the Pythagoreans had a particular funeral rite without which they thought the dead could not be happy. And he concluded his account by telling them that he had gone to the tomb of Lysis the day before and heard a voice informing him that his friend had been buried in accordance with the rite. A little while afterward, Theanor met Epaminondas, who had buried the philosopher, and from the description of the funeral rites, he drew the conclusion that the famous Theban general was very intimately acquainted with secret Orphic things. In a word, the whole account points to the existence of a particular rite which the Orphic considered the gate of paradise. But Plutarch, who was himself an Eleusinian initiate, takes the greatest care not to disclose the least bit of the secret rite.

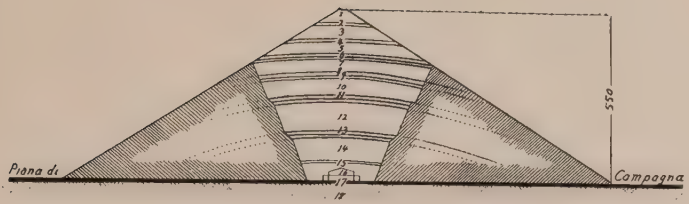
Fortunately, one of the most interesting archeological discoveries which southern Italy ever witnessed, throws definite light upon what Plutarch passes over in silence. I refer to the exploration of the Orphic tombs of Thurii. Along the river Crati in the neighborhood of the ancient Sybaris lies a chain of hills, which have claimed the attention of travelers and archeologists for a long

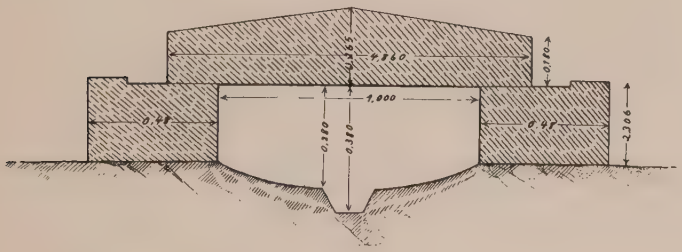
time. These mounds, from eight to ten meters high and from ten to thirty meters in diameter at the base, form a chain which runs the whole length of the plain to the sea. They are called in the local dialect, *timboni,* a word which comes from the Greek *tymbos,* which means tomb. In the years 1879-80, four of these *timboni* were explored and became at once very famous all over the world.

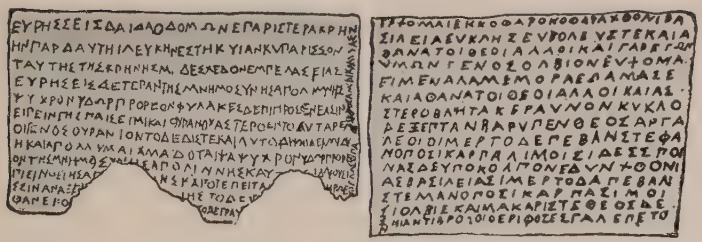
Orphic tombs.

According to the reports and the drawings of the discoverer Cavallari, the *timbone* is an artificial tumulus consisting of from ten to twelve alternating strata of soil and ashes, which contain bones and fragments of pottery. The mound protected a stone coffin containing a burnt body covered with a white sheet, resting in a wooden coffin which appears to have been burnt with the body itself. Near the head or the right hand of the corpse, small scrolls of gold leaf were found, containing engraved texts which turned out to be Orphic prayers, being in agreement with Orphic traditions and doctrines. The presence of these leaflets of gold makes us certain that the mounds of Thurii are Orphic tombs. Their presence in the valley of the river Crati can very easily be connected with the spread of Pythagoreanism all over southern Italy.

Pythagoreanism was, from ancient times, deeply rooted in southern Italy. Aside from the legends regarding Pythagoras himself, there is no doubt that the Pythagoreans in the fifth century had attained an overwhelming power all over southern Italy, with aristo-



*Above:* Plan of one of the Orphic tombs of Thurii (southern Italy) consisting of alternating strata of ashes and earth and at the bottom a stone coffin containing the body of an initiate.

*Below:* Two golden leaflets found in the Orphic tombs of Thurii, containing prayers to be recited by the soul and directions for the journey to the world of the dead. (Naples, National Museum.)

cratic Pythagorean governments in all the cities. The center of southern Italian Pythagoreanism was Croton. But the Pythagorean supremacy did not last long; a democratic revolt broke out in the fourth century. Everywhere Pythagoreans were killed or persecuted and the result was their dispersion.[27] At any rate, there is no doubt that the necropolis of Thurii is to be connected with the Pythagorean aristocracy of former days and that it is the only means of gaining a precise knowledge of the Orphic funeral rites. Besides, considering that the region of these Orphic tombs is very near Croton, the ancient center of Pythagoreanism, and near the country where Theanor and Lysis lived, no doubt can still remain that the rite alluded to by Theanor and passed over in silence by Plutarch is the Orphic rite.

Let us now analyse this rite. The stone coffin contained no funerary objects; only a partially burnt body covered with a white sheet, with a tiny roll of gold leaf near the head or the hand. The tumulus consisted of alternating strata of earth and ashes, remnants of successive pyres containing bones and a few fragments. One hypothesis which might be made to explain this rite is that the presence of these fragments indicates the work of movements in the ground. But the tumulus showed no trace of such movements; on the other hand, all the fragments found in the tumulus appeared to be isolated. It was impossible to piece them together and obtain complete objects. In other words, these frag-

ments cannot be explained as remnants of statuettes and vases, which had once been put into the tumulus and afterwards broken by movements in the ground. No doubt these fragments were put into the tumulus in their present condition, as fragments.

We find ourselves in the presence of a strange and peculiar rite, perfectly alien to Greek customs, which must have some underlying cause. The chief difference which marks off this rite is the absence of all funereal furniture. The Greeks, like most ancient people, considered the after-life as a continuation of earthly life. This idea is derived from very old conceptions, illustrated by the tombs of the iron age shaped like huts, by the pre-Hellenic tombs with door and corridor. This idea never disappeared, as is proved by the Greek tombs, like chambers, arranged in the form of a triclinium, with the dead laid on their stone beds. Striking illustrations of this are the tombs of Syria, Macedonia, and southern Russia, with their architectural façades, on the analogy of real houses.

The funeral rites of southern Italy conform to these conceptions: everywhere, with more or less adequacy, the tomb rivals the home. Especially in Apulia, the imitation of the home reached an unusual degree of luxury and beauty. Nothing can make more explicit how alien to Greek thought the Orphic ideas of the after-life were than to enter in imagination one of these tombs, which, though they have since disappeared, were described carefully by their discoverers. "Towards the middle of

Two sepulchral wall paintings from Pæstum, showing deceased warriors returning from a victory. (Naples, National Museum.)

*Above:* Sepulchral wall painting from Cumæ, showing the toilet of the dead represented as still living. (Naples, National Museum.)
*Below:* Campanian sepulchral wall painting, showing the deceased receiving gifts. (Museum of Capua.)

the subterranean construction"—relates the royal architect, Pilsi, in 1813—"reclining on an elevated block cut out of the sandstone of which the tomb is constructed, lay a warrior with cuirass and helmet and one greave only. His bones dissolved into powder immediately upon coming in contact with the air. On the front part of the square block are sculptured in bas-relief a sea-horse and a fox. On the left of the vault, hollowed out of sandstone, a mastiff, and on the other side, a wild boar. All around are placed vases, some simple, some of more elaborate design." There, among real treasures of art, the warriors slept the eternal sleep, armed as though ready to spring up and to fight even after death. The care taken to imitate real life as far as possible appears especially in the fact that the warrior had but one greave, according to the custom of the Samnites, pointed out by Livy,[28] for they protected the uncovered leg with their long shields.

Another tomb was discovered at Canosa in 1853 and covered over again, as was customary with the Bourbons, after the vases had been removed to the Museum of Naples. We can, however, get an idea of it from the drawings made at the time by an Englishman, named Wredford, as well as those of the architect Bonucci. This tomb was a real subterranean house, consisting of various rooms on the right and on the left of a central corridor. Along this corridor were doors after the Egyptian and primitive Greek style, following one after another as though they were the doors to so

many dwellings. They were adorned with Ionic pilasters. A delicate wreath was sculptured between the volutes of the capital. At the end of the corridor was another funeral house that showed the same type of entrance and exterior decoration. Each of these entrances opened into a room, covered by a ceiling with beams sculptured from the same mass out of which the whole hypogeum was hewn. There was always a second room and sometimes a third. A wall parallel to that of the principal entrance divided the rooms. It was adorned with Ionic columns and paintings consisting of white squares upon a red background. In the squares were painted sirens. One or more skeletons were found in the middle of the first room, dressed in their armor or in their precious ornaments. Painted vases of all heights and shapes, furniture of many kinds and utensils of various sorts were discovered around the bodies.

I have dwelt in detail upon the Canosian tombs, because they furnish splendid illustrations of a realistic conception of the after-life. But this is not to be taken as meaning that underground homes for the dead were peculiar to Canosa. Everywhere in southern Italy splendid examples of tombs are to be found, consisting of various rooms, containing beds for the resting dead, and decorated with architectural doors, with paintings of warriors, female dancers, meetings of women and warriors, all episodes of daily, earthly life, intended to emphasize its continuation in the after-life.[29]

The custom of adorning the walls of sepulchral

Drawings of the English traveler Wredford, showing the hypogæum excavated in Canosa (southern Italy) in 1853-4. The upper drawing represents the entrance corridor with the doors of the burial chambers on both sides. The lower drawing represents the interior of a burial chamber, with the body lying on a bed and numerous votary objects around it.

*Above:* Terra-cotta relief of a Hellenistic building, showing its similarity to the Canosian tombs. (Naples, National Museum.)
*Below:* Façade of a Pompeian house, showing the striking architectural resemblance to the façades of the Canosian tombs.

vaults, in order to surround the dead with representations and reminders of their former lives, seems to have been particularly widespread in southern Italy, especially in Campania. A sepulchral vault at Cumæ was adorned with paintings showing dancing and banqueting scenes. Another Cumæan vault exhibited episodes of woman's daily life. Other tombs, found in the neighborhood of S. Maria, show fighting warriors, perhaps in honor of the dead, or coming back from the war bearing triumphantly the arms of their slain enemies. Other paintings show ladies dressing themselves, funeral rites, and so on. The custom of surrounding the dead with as many relics or reminders of his former life as possible reached a height in southern Italy perhaps unrivaled in antiquity, with the sole exception of Egypt. Every object of daily life has been found in the southern Italian tombs: arms,[30] chandeliers,[31] lamps,[32] mirrors,[33] boxes,[34] in evident accordance with the personal tastes of the dead. Some tombs contained kitchen utensils and tools;[35] in one tomb a dish of food was found near the dead;[36] in other tombs lamps hung from the ceiling.[37] The decoration itself marks an evident desire for accuracy in reproducing as well as possible the homes of the living, perfectly in line with the Hellenistic imagination and ideas of beauty.

Comparisons between southern Italian tombs and Pompeian houses afford evidence of this. The façades of the Canosian tombs, as reproduced in the drawings of Wredford, with a balcony adorned with columns on

the upper floor, conform perfectly on the one hand with some Pompeian houses excavated in the last few years, showing an upper balcony; on the other hand, with an interesting terra-cotta relief in the Naples Museum, reproducing the façade of a Hellenistic building. All the elements of the Pompeian wall decoration appear on the walls of southern Italian tombs: imitation porches, fountains, pillars, columns, doors, windows,[38] painted objects like ribbons, dishes, garlands, arms hanging on the wall;[39] sometimes even these objects themselves have been found hanging on the wall as in a real house.[40]

In order to make clear the sharp contradiction between this after-life realism and the Orphic funeral rites, let us look at the realistic terra-cotta tablets of Locri,[41] which date from the fifth century, and are therefore not only contemporary with the golden age of Orphism but were even located near Croton, the famous center of Orphism. Undoubtedly the scenes reproduced on these tablets refer to the after-life, but nothing would differentiate these after-life episodes from the concerns of daily life if the presence of funereal symbols or of the infernal gods themselves did not furnish good evidence as to the real meaning of these tablets. There are young girls who dress or adorn themselves, women who receive gifts, servants who bring mirrors or boxes; and all around these persons are vases, chests, chairs and other furniture. Nothing suggests the idea that all these things are imagined to

happen in the after-life: everything leads us to think that they belong to our earthly world.

I need not point out the connection between such after-life realism and the peculiar Greek realistic mentality, which I have expounded. Let me merely say, in conclusion, that I have dwelt in detail upon the southern Italian tombs because it seems to me that a direct acquaintance with these tombs serves better than any verbal arguments to portray the deep gulf which separated Orphic from Greek traditions. The solitary chain of mounds which dominates the lonely valley of the Crati is almost a symbol; it signifies how isolated Orphism was in the extreme south of Italy, where, for some reason, it was at home. If you compare the Orphic tumuli, which contained nothing but some fragments of jars and the bones of the buried, with the luxurious Canusian underground mansions you realize that two different worlds are here face to face, without any possibility of mutual understanding.

But now comes the question: What is the connection between the Orphic burial rite and the Orphic ideas of the after-life? The Orphic tombs of Thurii make us think that the after-life descriptions by Pindar and Plato, referred to above, relate only to some popular beliefs, which did not correspond entirely with the Orphic after-life doctrines. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that between the realistic descriptions of the after-life blessedness, consisting in music, songs, banquets and sports, and the rite of the Orphic tumuli there is

an undeniable contradiction and that, on the last account, the underground vaults full of arms and objects intended to serve the daily pleasure of the dead are perfectly in line with the realism of the Pindaric and Platonic descriptions. The *timboni* of Thurii prove that, behind the veil of the popular Orphic beliefs, there was something deeper and more spiritual, which only the initiates were entitled to know.

Let us try to reveal this secret doctrine of the afterlife. As repeatedly said, the Orphic considered the body as a prison wherein the soul pays for the sin committed by the Titans, which constitutes its inherited weakness. From this prison, souls can finally escape through death, the only perfect catharsis, the unique, complete deliverance of the soul from its bodily burden. But this deliverance, to speak properly, can be assured only by destruction of the body. While the body exists there is a possibility that the soul may again enter its former prison. Hence the necessity, not only of death, but also of a funeral rite which involves the annihilation of the body. Therein, in my opinion, consisted the secret rite of the Orphics which Theanor claimed to be necessary in order to attain blessedness. I think that the Orphics believed that no possibility of a full blessedness could ever exist until the destruction of the bodily prison gave assurance that the soul could never be compelled to enter his former prison again. If my conjecture is right, there is no doubt that the usual Greek burial rites must have appeared quite inadequate to Orphics.

Furthermore the Orphics had another reason for preferring to burn their dead instead of burying them. They believed that fire had the power to blot away the sins of the soul, and especially the original Titanic sin.[42] That is why Proclus considered Patroclus' burning in the Iliad as a symbol of the apotheosis of the soul [43] and assumed that by contact with fire man shared in the divine nature.[44] To be sure, the Orphics were very far from considering their burial rite in the light of the general notions. They attributed to it a meaning which outsiders could not grasp. The goal which they sought by burning their dead was not to bury a dead body, as was customary for the Greeks, but to deliver the soul from its bodily prison and to purify it from the Titanic inheritance. Through the funeral rites they symbolized the break which death made between life and the afterlife, the starting point of another destiny.

Now we can try to explain the white sheet which, according to the report of the discoverers, covered the dead in the tumuli. I think that this sheet is nothing else than the *syndone,* the sacred veil of the mysteries. The law of Andania, containing a series of ritual rules relating to initiations, reminds us of a veil called *syndonitis.*[45] The *syndone* was also customary in Dionysiac rites [46] and in the Isiac initiations.[47] Pythagoras covered his disciples with a *syndone* while he taught,[48] in order to symbolize, perhaps, their separation from the world; that is why several magic papyri prescribe a *syndone* for magical operations. The *syndone* was most probably

a white linen veil corresponding to the veil in which the Orphics and the Pythagoreans used to wrap their dead.[49] Perhaps we can recognize a *syndone* in the white veil very often required for peculiar cults and rites, for incubation practices, and so on.

There is no doubt about the sacred and mystic character of the *syndone;* the dead and the initiates alike used to be wrapped in a white veil in order to indicate the new life they had entered, to declare by way of a symbol the new life bestowed upon them. All this points towards the conclusion that the sheet which covered the Orphics of Thurii was a *syndone* intended to signify the blessedness which the dead had attained at first through initiation and afterwards through death.

Herein lies also, in my opinion, the explanation of the fragments found between the strata of ashes in the tumuli. As said above, there is no doubt that these fragments were put into the strata intentionally, at every successive pyre. Now we can admit with considerable assurance that these fragments meant symbolically the end of every earthly deed or wish.

If I am right, this is the content of the Orphic rite, which would be fully understood only by initiates. And only through the Orphic rite, could the dead hope to come into the presence of Persephone and to recite to the goddess the prayer inscribed on gold which brethren had piously put near his head, in order that he might recite it and enter at last into the world of the blessed.

Two terra-cotta reliefs found in Lokroi (southern Italy). The one on the left shows the deceased receiving gifts, and, on the right, the deceased opening a chest, eloquent testimonies to the realistic after-life pictured by Orphism.

These are the theological implications of the Orphic palingenesis. The new life, bestowed upon the initiates, transformed them into new beings endowed with peculiar duties and rights and in the after-life with a blessedness attainable through a special funeral rite which was in sharp contrast with the current traditions of the Greeks.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE ORIGIN OF ORPHISM

Having made this survey of the general characteristics of Orphism, we may now inquire into its history. And first of all, we must obtain a clear, general, historical perspective for Orphism. Traditionally Orphism is regarded as merely a more or less interesting feature of classic Greek culture. In the last analysis, it is generally projected against the background of Greek history, it is more or less intimately associated with Greek culture, and is supposed to be more or less influenced by classic Greek thought. Hence the tendency to consider the history of Orphism either as merely an aspect of the history of Greek thought or to deny that there ever was a history of Orphism.

My point of view is quite different. I think that, in order to gain a correct understanding of Orphism, the first thing to do is to grasp its individual essence, to get a clear insight into the points of difference which distinguish Orphism from Greek culture, before it is possible to pursue its historical career. In a word, my point of view demands a consideration of Orphism not as a peculiar aspect of Greek religious thought, but as a separate religion which originally stood in sharp opposition to classic Greek religion. In order to see the

full force of my assumption, let us consider, first of all, the origin of Orphism.

History divides religions with regard to their origin into two great categories: natural or spontaneous religions and doctrinal or revealed religions. To the first class belong all religions which arose gradually without having been founded or revealed by any historical person. Fetishism, dæmonism, animism and polytheism belong to this class. All religions of the ancient world, as far as their origin is concerned, belong to the spontaneous religions. To the doctrinal or revealed religions belong all religions which either claim to have been founded by an historical person, or were actually so founded. Judaism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Islam, Manichæism, Jainism, Confucianism and Taoism belong to this second class, because the origin of each is actually associated with a presumably historical person, such as Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Zarathustra, Mahomet, Mani, Mahavira, Kongtse and Laotse. From this point of view we would also include among doctrinal religions most of the Islamic, Buddhist and Christian heresies.

Between these two classes of religions, there are many essential differences, in addition to their different kinds of origin. The spontaneous religions which do not boast of a founder at all, are the outgrowth of primitive, unconscious, religious needs, which were never shaped into any rigid, definite scheme. Herein lies the explanation of the overwhelming power exerted by the

imagination in these religions, and, conversely, of their theoretical and philosophical poverty. The doctrinal religions, on the other hand, thanks to the fact that they owe their origin to individuals, bear from the start the stamp of a mind or will; they are less fanciful but they stand on a higher level of thought. The former exert their chief influence on the history of art; the latter attain their most conspicuous successes in the history of philosophy.

Aside from these general differences, three points require special attention: first, the founder. The Greeks never believed that their religion had been founded. The origin of the Greek religion, which is without doubt the most outstanding representative of all spontaneous religions, was lost for the Greek in the darkness of the past. Nobody knew where and when Greek religion had started. The problem of the origin of their religion was never seriously considered by the Greeks, although the origin of the world was one of the most familiar problems of Greek philosophers.

Conversely, doctrinal religions not only associate their origin with the work of a founder, but around the person of this founder they center many of their important features, of which eventually the worship of the founder is the most important. For instance, Christianity, Buddhism and Taoism devote a real cult to their founders. Other religions, although they do not go so far, bestow upon their founders a particular reverence. At any rate, the life of the founder is of

paramount interest to everyone who belongs to his religion. Hence the great importance attributed to his doings; the tendency to surround his person with a halo of legends and miracles; to hold him as a model of virtue, heroism, loyalty, faith, to be copied by men as far as possible; to lay the greatest emphasis on the acceptance of his sayings as a permanent standard of life and judgment, so that the whole religious life is considered as a daily enactment of the master's teachings.

All this is unknown to spontaneous religions. The Greeks never held that their religion had been founded and never revered anybody as a religious founder. The heroes or the deified men worshiped by the Greeks owed the reverence they received to different lines of thought. Prophets were not unknown to the Greeks, but none of them were ever believed to have brought into the world a new religion. No personage ever existed in Greece whose deeds had an exceptional religious interest for the Greeks, nor did they attach any great religious importance to the sayings of prophets or philosophers. No one would compare the worship of Jesus with the cult of Heracles or Alexander; the miracles of Christ with the deeds of Theseus; the sayings of Buddha with the sayings of Socrates.

A second distinction between spontaneous and doctrinal religions is the sacred book. Every doctrinal religion has one or more sacred books, whose origin is closely connected with the person of its founder: Juda-

ism has the books of Moses; Christianity the Gospels; Buddhism the Tripitaka; Zoroastrianism the Avesta; Islam the Koran; Taoism the Tao-Teh-King; Confucianism the Shou-King. The sacred book most frequently contains some accounts of the life of the founder and his principal sayings and teachings. At any rate, it constitutes the permanent basis of the whole religion, which rests entirely on its authority.

Spontaneous religions never have sacred books. The Greeks never knew anything which might be compared to the Gospels or to the Old Testament. They never had recourse to a sacred book in order to get advice about religious problems, and never felt bound to bow to the authority of a sacred book. The Sibylline books of the Romans, the Hermetic books of the Greeks, the penitential psalms of the Babylonians, had only a ritual importance.

The third point of difference is theology. By this word I mean to indicate a complex of beliefs and dogmas about religious matters which in most cases are connected with the founder and center about some of his teachings. These dogmas are authoritative in regard to the beliefs of everyone who assumes to follow this religion, and they rest on the authority of the sacred books. Every founded religion has some theological doctrines. To be a Christian or Jew or Buddhist means not only to appreciate Christianity or Judaism or Buddhism, but to accept loyally the dogmas wherein, accord-

ing to orthodoxy, the Christian or Jewish or Buddhist faith consists.

Spontaneous religions have no theology at all. The Greeks had a complex of thoughts and theories about divine things, but they never came upon the idea that the acceptance of the Greek religion involved the acceptance of any definite notions about the gods or human destiny. Nor had the Greeks any books wherein these notions were dogmatized.

These are the general differences which distinguish spontaneous from doctrinal religions. The historical functions are quite different in the two cases. Spontaneous religions possess an overwhelming power of imagination, which exerts its influence on every spiritual activity. Hence a fullness of images, myths, tales and legends which force their way to expression and lead to artistic creation. Hence the leading part played by polytheism in the history of art. But on the other hand, the lack of a sacred tradition and of a living interest in definite dogmas and doctrines entails indifference toward theoretical lines of thought and hence little or no capacity for philosophic activity. Doctrinal religions, thanks to the necessity of conserving traditions, dogmas, beliefs and sayings, have always little imaginative tendency and a peculiar skill in philosophy. Hence the influence exerted by them on the history of philosophy. If in the light of history you consider, on the one hand, Greek or Babylonian religions, and, on the other, Juda-

ism or Buddhism, you will realize what different types of culture these religious traditions represent.

Now I think we have reached a solid criterion of judgment for Orphism. There is no doubt that it must be classed with the doctrinal religions. It lacks none of their distinctive features. First of all, the founder. I mean a person called Orpheus, whose existence was for Orphics and for whole ancient world as certain as that of Jesus for Christians and for us.[1] Orpheus was believed to have founded the Orphic mysteries, whose very name testified to their derivation from him, just as Christianity asserts by its name its kinship with Christ, and Buddhism bears in its name the stamp of its founder. Furthermore Orphism had a group of sacred books (Katabasis, Theogony, Hymns, and so on)[2] which were partly attributed to Orpheus himself and contained accounts of his deeds (for instance, the Descent to Hades), of religious traditions and dogmas (for instance, the Theogony), of ritual prayers (for instance, the Hymns), and so on. Quite unlike the Homeric poems, to take a striking contrast, these books never enjoy a high artistic reputation; nothing leads us to conclude that the Orphics found therein more than religious directions and prescriptions, and that they had recourse to them for artistic education.

These sacred books constituted a body of theological and dogmatic doctrines, the acceptance of which was the first condition for belonging to the Orphic brotherhood. The Homeric poems, on the contrary, were never

considered by the Greeks as sacred books, and, notwithstanding the high part they played in the history of Greek religion, no Greek transformed them into religious guides. The Orphic tradition is also notable for the poverty of its mythology. Compared with the great richness of Greek mythology Orphic myths appear very scant and simple. In the last analysis, Orphism had no mythology of its own, with the exception of a few theological accounts and tales, such as the description of the world of the dead, and some cosmogonies; otherwise nothing comparable to the enormous richness of Greek mythology. This lack of mythical interest is offset by a living interest in theological and cosmological problems, as is shown by the very great antiquity of Orphic theogonies and cosmogonies, and their tendency to generate philosophies. Closely related to this theological trend is an innate enmity towards new ideas or innovations. If you remember that there was no great Greek poet to whom Greek mythology was not indebted for new myths, you will realize what an astonishing conservative trait Orphism had, which never invented new myths, but contented itself with its prehistoric tales, coming down from the eighth century before Christ to the Neoplatonists, without reflecting the great transformations undergone by Greek mythology from Homer to Lucian.[8]

All this conveys the impression that Orphism was a religion whose origin, beliefs and history had nothing in common with Greek religion, aside from those mutual

influences which are common among religions. In my opinion the whole history of Orphism points to something alien to the Greek spirit, which from the very outset followed a different line and which was not assimilated until the Hellenistic age. In fact, Orphism never had a rich imaginative content. Its chief interest was theological and hence, philosophical; its influence was felt not in Greek art but in Greek philosophy. On the whole it seems to me sufficiently clear that neither can the history of Greek art be explained without Greek polytheism, nor the history of Greek philosophy apart from Orphism. Greek religion and Orphic religion represent historically two different worlds, which never understood and never fully accepted each other, and the history of Greek thought consisted, as I shall show, in a gradual victory of the Orphic religion over the Greek religion. Christianity marks the climax of this process.

Now we must revert to the problem which was raised at the beginning of this chapter: the origin of Orphism; and first, to the person of Orpheus himself. Scholars generally are in agreement about the mythical origin of Orpheus. The only exception, it would see, is Miss Harrison, who consistently advocated the historicity of Orpheus. I am in perfect agreement with Miss Harrison's contention for his historicity, although, in my opinion, she is very far from putting him in the proper historical light.

Now, who was Orpheus, or, to speak more properly, that unknown person whom mythology for reasons un-

known called Orpheus? Following our method, we must again venture beyond the bounds of classical philology and seek help from the comparative history of religions. It is hardly necessary to dwell again on the ghost dance religion. The only thing I now wish to point out is the striking resemblance between the ghost dance religion and Orphism.[4] The starting-point of this Indian revival was an after-life vision of a prophet, who claimed to have descended to the abode of the dead and to have seen the dead. He worked up the people into ecstasy and made them see the world of the dead and converse with the dead. These visions, accompanied and evoked by dances, became the cause of a tremendous revival. They were described in songs, giving rise to a sort of eschatological literature, which constituted the foundation of the new religion. The tribe wherein the revival burst out and the prophet who brought it about, attained a sort of preeminence, which was enjoyed by the disciples of the pioneers, even in later times. The aim of the revival was a moral and spiritual enlightenment and an improvement of the mutual relations between men and tribes. These main features of the ghost dance religion reveal surprising resemblances to Orphism. Their origins: Wovoka, Tävibo, Sitting Bull, were believed, like Orpheus, to have descended into the world of the dead. The content of both religions consisted in after-life visions and conversations with the dead; the accounts in the Indian visions and the Orphic visions preserved in the Odyssey, as well as by

Plato and Plutarch, are very similar. In both religions the leading part is played by ecstatic dances, as a means for attaining collective visions. We have already seen that the dance always had a prominent part in the mysteries, that there was no mystery without dances, and that Orpheus and the other masters of Orphism were believed to have been excellent dancers themselves. We have also seen that the Orphic liturgy included songs dealing somewhat with the after-life. Indian visions gave rise to a sort of rough drawing picturing the after-life world as seen; and the Orphic visions gave rise to after-life paintings which were forerunners of the paintings of Hades during the classical age. The Indian visions became the starting point of an eschatological geography, in other words, of a science of the world of the dead; from the Orphic visions arose a system of the most detailed knowledge about this world. Tävibo, the first Indian prophet, had a son named Wovoka, who inherited the ecstatic power and the religious authority of his father; Orpheus, having received, according to the tradition, from Œagrus the knowledge of the mysteries, handed over his wisdom to his son Linus, whose son Museus inherited his father's power. Sitting Bull and Wovoka had some disciples who followed the master's teachings and became great prophets themselves, just as, according to traditions, Linus was a pupil of Orpheus and Museus of Linus.[5]

The resemblances between the ghost dance religion and Orphism are numerous and striking enough, but

this does not mean that Orphism must be considered as a sort of primitive ghost dance religion, for these comparisons are valid only if differences are also taken into consideration. No one will deny that between primitive Greeks, or more precisely Thracians (since I claim Orphism had a Thracian origin), and American Indians there are many points of difference. But one point seems to me certain: a resemblance of ways and means which cannot be quite accidental. For this reason I think we are entitled to assume, with proper reservations, that the origin of Orphism is in general similar to that of the ghost dance religion or other similar primitive religions. In short, if I am right, we are entitled to assume that Orphism was a primitive or ecstatic religion founded by some shaman, or medicine man, whom later tradition named Orpheus.

The tradition furnishes us some clues which seem to substantiate this theory. First of all, there is the tradition regarding Orpheus as a magician, who by means of music and divination brought about the orgiastic frenzy of initiations. Furthermore I might emphasize the tradition which attributed to Orpheus the discovery of mysteries and of the mystery theology. Diodorus says, for instance, that Orpheus introduced into the mysteries the punishments of the wicked and the fields of the blessed, and told myths about them.[6] Another tradition believed him to be capable of bringing back the dead from Hades.[7] Orphics assumed that he had actually descended into Hades, and attributed to him

the authorship of a Katabasis, in which the world of the dead was described. Of course the legends which in later times center around the famous magician no longer bear the stamp of his primitive savageness, since his mythical character was continually remodelled according to the demands of a more refined civilization. But with closer analysis, it is easy to recover the primitive spirit behind the late refinements. Especially the stories about the musical skill of Orpheus are suitable for such a reconstruction. Behind the poetical myth of a wonderful singer we must picture the dreadful person of a magician, who was able to rule over the whole world because of his musical endowments. In other words, the myth of the marvelous musical abilities of Orpheus must be considered in the light of the primitive magical conception of music, which is today still very common among primitive tribes. Even the legend of Eurydice, divested of the later elements, reminds us of a primitive magician who was able to bring the dead back to life by means of musical sorceries.

All this converges towards the conclusion that behind the traditional Orpheus stood a primitive shaman, who first introduced into Greece an ecstatic religion consisting mainly in visions of the after-life. I have used the word, shaman, but I must confess that, notwithstanding some similarities which I think exist between Orpheus and shamans, we are probably not doing justice to him in using this word. Shamanism is too intimately associated with unintelligent superstition and

magic to be adopted as a term of comparison for Orphism, which though it may have had the lowest possible origin, contained in itself the germs of higher moral evolution than shamanism ever knew.

For this reason, considering its moral implications, I think that Orphism could better be compared with the primitive Jewish prophets: I am alluding to the *Nebi'im*, who were the forerunners of the great prophets. The *Nebi'im* show a blend of frenzy and wisdom, savageness and faith, which, if I am right, conforms perfectly to the image I have of this primitive prophet. We must not overlook the miracles and magic qualities of the *Nebi'im*, in this comparison, nor their ecstatic endowments. From time to time the spirit of God came upon them suddenly and they felt different from ordinary men. They fell into a sort of frenzy; they undressed; they lay on the ground unconscious; they looked like madmen. This frenzy very often assumed a collective character and became a sort of ecstatic revival. Often they met in great numbers (once over four hundred) and they wandered through the country singing and playing and dancing. Often they had visions.[8] In short, all the features of primitive medicine men or shamans are undoubtedly to be found in the Jewish *Nebi'im*. But they have something more; I mean the capacity to lift themselves above this low level and to attain something higher. That is the main reason why I would regard Orpheus as a primitive *Nebi*.

It may now be well to devote a few words to the

myth of Eurydice. There is general agreement among scholars in considering this myth as the product of a later age. At first Orpheus had nothing in common with Eurydice. In the Homeric Katabasis, Orpheus does not exist at all; in the Platonic vision, Er sees Orpheus among other souls, but there is no hint of Eurydice;[9] in the *nekyia* of Polygnotus, according to Pausanias' description, and in the sixth book of the Æneid, Orpheus is described as a singer, but Eurydice is not mentioned. All this leads to the conclusion that the primitive Orphic myth did not recognize Eurydice at all, although the legend appears in the sixth century outside of Orphism as is shown by the well-known relief of Naples. The moving story of the beloved wife, whom Orpheus tries to take away from Hades by means of songs and whom he loses at last forever, arose outside of Orphism. An old tradition says that Orpheus' wife was not Eurydice but Agriope, and that he really took her away from the world of the dead.[10] Agriope, a strange name, which means "with savage eyes," savors very much of the wife of a powerful primitive shaman. It seems to me very probable that the original myth referred not to Eurydice but to Agriope, and told nothing about the romantic loss of the beloved wife; but quite to the contrary, related that Orpheus had by means of his magical power taken his wife from the world of the dead. In other words, the myth arose, in my opinion, in connection with the power attributed to Orpheus of

taking the dead away from their abode and leading them to life again. Perhaps the Agriope myth arose through the astonishment at the first visions produced by the powerful musician, which, of course, in accordance with primitive mentality, were considered as real journeys to the after-life taken by persons whom Orpheus had recalled to life. And nothing is more reasonable than to surmise that his wife, "the woman with savage eyes," became one of the first living witnesses to the mysterious power of her husband. Later on, I imagine, the Agriope story met the Eurydice myth, which originally had nothing in common with Orphism, and from their meeting arose the myth of the death of Eurydice and the futile descent of Orpheus into Hades.

The next problem is: Where did this prophet live, or, in other words, where did Orphism arise? In dealing with this problem we must not overlook the capital point that Orphism was closely connected with the worship of Dionysus. I imagine that the links between the Dionysiac religion and Orphism might be aptly compared with the links which exist between a religion and its sects; for instance, between Christianity and Lutheranism. In other words, I think that Orphism was a particular branch of the Dionysiac religion centering around the person and the activity of a reformer, which in time reached the importance and the diffusion of a really new religion. Lutheranism might well, as I said, be used, within proper bounds, as a comparison. For

this reason we cannot go into an inquiry about the origin of Orphism without taking Dionysism itself into account.

The Greeks considered Dionysus as alien to Greece. As a matter of fact, nothing was more foreign to Mycenean Greece than the central belief and peculiarity of the Dionysiac religion, the belief in the immortality of souls. This belief was thoroughly alien to Greek thought. The Homeric eschatology does not claim immortality for human souls; the pitiful condition of the souls after death depicted in the Homeric poems has nothing to do with any concept of immortality whatsoever. For Homeric society, immortality is a divine endowment, a mark of distinction for the gods. The Olympian gods are in the last analysis not very different from human kings and tyrants: they enjoy human joys, are more beautiful and vigorous than men, but they have also sorrows and grievances, they can be hurt or wounded, and they are not perfectly masters of themselves, since their will is subject to the decrees of Moira, which they cannot overcome. The only thing which makes them really superior is their immortality. They are real gods because they do not die, thanks to the nectar and the ambrosia which they eat and drink.[11] Immortality is a divine privilege, which the average man will never attain. Only from time to time destiny bestows upon a human being the great privilege of not dying, of escaping dreadful Hades.[12] Everyone who is granted this gift, escapes death completely and while still alive is

taken to the Islands of the Blessed, which are not under the earth but very far from the world of the living; and there they enjoy immortality. That is the destiny of Menelaus, according to the prophecy of Proteus in the Odyssey;[13] Calypso offers Odysseus the privilege of immortality if he remains with her.[14] In short, the Greeks never entertained the idea that human souls might be immortal. But this idea was, nevertheless, closely associated with the Dionysiac religion.

In my opinion, the origin of this belief lay in the visions. Having seen the dead and conversed with them, people felt certain that the dead were still alive. Considering their realistic interpretation of visions, there was no room for a different conclusion. From the first visions of the dead arose, in my opinion, a belief in the immortality of the soul; or, rather, both ideas formed one and the same concept, because after-life visions can not exist without a prior assurance that the souls actually exist, and the souls cannot be seen without concluding that they are immortal. The Greeks never attained the idea of immortality because they did not have such visions. They were alien to Greek thought. The Homeric poems regard the cult of Dionysus as a foreign religion not congenial to Greek society. The Iliad alludes only twice to the Dionysiac religion, without concealing a sort of unconscious enmity. The first allusion is to the flight of Dionysus when, pursued by Lycurgus, he took refuge with Thetis.[15] The second one compares Andromache, grieving at Hector's death

and running to the tower, to a mænad.[16] According to the Homeric poems, Dionysus does not belong to the Olympian gods at all; the myth of his ascent to Olympus and of his reception by the other gods arose later; the Iliad does not seem to know this myth. Thrace itself, the native country of the Dionysiac religion, appeared to the Homeric Greeks as a savage and inhospitable country: Ares, the cruel and savage god of war, is said by Homer to have been born in Thrace.[17] The myth of Thereus, son of Ares and king of the Thracians, quite well depicts the Greek disdain for Thracian savagery. All this leads to the impression that the Dionysiac religion in its early stage was alien to Greek culture during its corresponding stage, the late Minoan age.

As a matter of fact, the Greeks agreed in attributing to the Dionysiac religion a Thracian origin, and science has reached the same conclusion. Dionysus himself bore a Thracian name, Sabus or Sabazius.[18] Ecstasy and frenzy, which were unknown to the Homeric religion, were customary in Thrace from the most ancient times.[19] It cannot be denied that a great contribution to the Thracian ecstatic traits may have come from their fondness for wine and beer.[20] At any rate, ecstasy was undoubtedly a prominent feature of Thracian culture, and was attained by means of dances and intoxicating drinks.

Prophets too were very common in Thrace: among the Satrians, a Thracian tribe, there were some prophets

who had an oracle of Dionysus;[21] on Mount Pangaios lived a prophet of Dionysus named Rhesus;[22] Aristotle also refers to a Thracian Dionysiac oracle.[23] Spartacus' wife, who was born in Thrace, was endowed with prophetic power.[24] A Thracian prophet attained great renown in Rome in the age of Augustus.[25] From all this we gather that Thrace was the most likely country for an ecstatic religion, and we can reach a satisfactory explanation for the great development achieved by the cult of Dionysus there. Even in historical times it seems that frenzy and ecstasy were indigenous to Thrace and Macedonia. The bacchic orgies consisted of savage dances performed at night by women who were dressed in the skins of kids, goats or panthers, and carried torches and thyrsi. They danced furiously and uninterruptedly until they became frenzied, tore kids or goats to pieces, and ate their raw flesh. Euripides gives a vivid account of these orgies, which he witnessed in Macedonia.[26] Dionysus, himself, was supposed to be present at the dances. The notion of the invisible presence of Dionysus during certain Dionysiac festivals was still current in the classical age. He was supposed to be present during the trieteric festivals celebrated all over Greece;[27] people thought that Dionysus abode in the world of the dead and that from time to time he came to the world of the living.[28] Of course, it is very plain that the bacchic orgies were at their outset nothing but mimetic magical dances, by

which the god was induced to appear to men, who in turn were masked in the image of the god.

The belief in immortality was closely connected with such Dionysiac ecstasy: the Getæ, a Thracian tribe, believed, according to Herodotus, in one god only, whose name was Salmoxis, and who abode in a grotto into which the dead went and attained immortality.[29]

Now, considering the fact that Orphism was closely connected with the Dionysiac religion, we can reasonably suppose that Orphism itself was alien at its very outset to Greek thought, and that we must seek its origin in Thrace. All traditions and evidences point in this direction. Mount Pieria, which is in Macedonia near the Thracian border, and was regarded by the ancients as belonging to Thrace, was a conspicuous center of the cult and tradition of Orpheus. Calliope, mother of Orpheus, was said to be a daughter of Pierus, whose name points to Pieria. On Mount Olympus was the tomb of Orpheus, and in the age of Alexander a statue of the prophet was still extant there. Dion, a Macedonian city, was also a center of Orphic traditions. Nor must we pass over in silence the fact Macedonia had always been from ancient times a celebrated center of Dionysiac revivals, which seem to have been quite indigenous there. Of the tremendous power of these Macedonian Dionysiac orgies Euripides gives us a vivid notion in his tragedy referred to above. Near Macedonia was Thracia, another even more important center of Orphism. On Mount Pangaios the popular tradition

located Libethrum, where the Muses gathered the bones of Orpheus, torn in pieces by the Mænads. Other traditions said that he had been torn in pieces on the Pangaios itself. Another tradition said that on the top of the mountain he used to adore Helios. Especially the region around Ismaros, the mountain Serrhion, and the town Maronia, play a conspicuous part in the history of Orphism. A widespread tradition claimed that Orpheus was born in the land of the Cicones, which name indicates the region just referred to. Aristotle says that Orpheus was buried in Ciconia. The name of Ismara, a nymph who had a son by him, named Rythmonios, points to the same region. It was also told that on Mount Serrhion Orpheus had enacted his mysteries. At Zone near Macedonia there was a tree which was said to have followed the singer, attracted by his song. Other traditions told of some mysteries founded by Orpheus in Ciconia. With the Odrysai, a powerful Thracian people, Orpheus was also connected; he was said to have introduced his mysteries among them, and to have been king over them. A tradition told how he had been torn in pieces on Mount Haimos.[30] To conclude, we have no reason for doubting that Orphism and its founder were not Greek at all, but most probably, if not certainly, Thracian.

Lastly we might try to determine the age when the prophet lived. The chief argument in this chronological problem is based on the fact that both Orphism and the cult of Dionysus were perfectly alien to the Minoan

culture. This statement conforms surprisingly to the fact that most traditions agree in asserting that Orpheus lived before the Trojan War, that is, in the pre-Hellenic age.[31] Taking into consideration the most reasonable of these traditions, which assumes that Orpheus lived many generations before the Trojan War, and putting the destruction of Homeric Troy (Troy III) about 1180 B.C., in connection with the Dorian invasion, we can put Orpheus back into the pre-Hellenic bronze age.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE CONQUEST OF GREECE

We are now prepared to pursue, as far as the evidence goes, the first steps taken by the Orphic revival in its career in Greece. I imagine it spread over Thrace without difficulty, and I assume that Orphism rapidly became a sort of Thracian national religion. But it goes without saying that it necessarily encountered many obstacles and difficulties when it came in touch with Greek culture, and tried to force its way down into Greece. As I have pointed out, there was an essential difference of aims and doctrines between Orphism (or better, Dionysism itself) and the Greek religion. They arose from different conceptions of life; they developed along different lines of thought; and they could not understand each other. Nevertheless the Orphic revival was endowed, like every mystic movement, with an invincible missionary tendency, with an imagined need for conversions, which compelled it to go beyond the limits of its own country and to invade the areas of other civilizations and religions. I call your attention to the *Bacchants* of Euripides. The most conspicuous feature of Dionysus, as sketched by the great poet, is religious fanaticism. He has no feeling, but a tremendous will to force his religion upon men. He has no pity and no

understanding; he is not capable of realizing the deep barrier which makes it impossible for Greeks, who never in their whole history show the least shadow of fanaticism, to accept his religion. He is a cruel and pitiless Torquemada who by means of terror, destruction and death forces men not to love him but to worship and to fear him.

The myths of Lycurgus and Pentheus, viewed in the light of history, are clear testimonies to this savage Dionysiac fanaticism. Lycurgus, a Thracian king, opposed Dionysus who was about to introduce his orgies into that country; according to the tradition, Dionysus was obliged to take refuge in the sea with Thetis, and Zeus blinded Lycurgus, who died a little afterward. According to another tradition, which seems to me to conform better to the primitive savageness, Lycurgus became mad and, mistaking his son for a vine, killed him with an ax. A third version says that he cut off his own leg. Pentheus, king of Thebes, opposed the introduction of the bacchic orgies; Dionysus avenged himself by persuading him to look at the secret orgies of the Bacchants from the top of a high tree. But the mother of Pentheus, who was participating in the sacred orgies with the other Theban women, noticed the presence of her son, and, thrown into a frenzy by Dionysus, mistook him for a wild beast. She tore him to pieces and went insane.

All this implies a picture of dreadful religious wars between the Dionysiac fanatic hordes and the Minoan

aristocrats, who opposed the new religion with every means, since it most probably appeared to them a dangerous madness politically as well. Lycurgus and Pentheus resemble to some extent the French and German Catholic sovereigns when they tried to break down Protestantism and Anabaptism. Dionysism was, in a word, a crude popular religion, which served as a refuge for the masses seeking happiness. And it necessarily became a mortal enemy of the Minoan religion of aristocratic selfishness. We cannot in this first stage distinguish Orphism from Dionysism. It seems very probable to me that they went together at first; and that the spread of Dionysism over Greece brought with it conditions favorable to the spread of Orphism. But I also think that Orphism in turn very soon became a valuable ally of Dionysism, thanks to the vigor derived from its prophetic origin. At any rate, Orphism, whether or not connected with Dionysism, spread rapidly over all Greece. Evidence of its early diffusion is given by the myth of Orpheus himself, which is to be found everywhere in Macedonia, on the Ægean, in central and western Greece, *et cetera.*[1] Sometimes the legend of Orpheus is connected with a cult of the hero, a fact which is particularly important here. At Lesbos, where according to the legend the head of the prophet had landed, there was a *bakcheion;*[2] on Helicon, in a temple of Demeter, there was a *xoanon* of Orpheus;[3] the mere fact that this image was a *xoanon* testifies to a very early origin of this cult.

A turning point in the further career of Orphism was the reconciliation between Dionysism and Greek religion, which found its mythical expression in the legend of the agreement between Dionysus and Apollo, the most representative god of Greek Olympus. Of course, we have no means at our disposal for pursuing this reconciliation in detail; we can only state it as a matter of fact, an historical event. For instance, at Delphi, the original center of the Apollonian religion, the tomb of Dionysus was shown;[4] on a pediment of the Delphic temple, Apollo is shown with the thiasus;[5] and according to the calendar of Delphi, the cult of both gods took place in summer and in winter by turn. This reconciliation most probably gave origin to a sacred painting, a reproduction or derivation of which is shown by a late Attic red-figured vase, now at Leningrad, wherein Dionysus and Apollo shake hands before the Delphic Omphalos.[6] It seems that Orphism felt this reconciliation very deeply. At a certain point it seems to have gone through a thorough transformation, absorbing many clearly Apollonian elements. This transformation might be attested by the myth that Orpheus was a son of Apollo and Calliope or Polymnia,[7] and that after his death his lyre was hung as a votive offering in the Temple of Apollo.[8] A tradition attributed to Orpheus the cult of Helios, an eclectic god, who combined in himself both gods, Apollo and Dionysus.[9] A legend told that Orpheus used to worship Helios on Mount Pangaios.[10]

Now it seems to me possible to connect this deep transformation of Orphism with the legend of Orpheus' death. According to the tradition, he was torn to pieces by the Mænads, but about the reasons for his death many stories were told. Some people assumed that he had been killed by some women who had been excluded from the orgies; another legend is particularly worth attention because Æschylus developed it as the background of his trilogy, the *Bassarai.* This legend tells how Orpheus, having held Dionysus in contempt, declared Helios the greatest of the gods, and that he used to get up every night and ascend Mount Pangaios to await the sunrise and adore Helios; and that Dionysus avenged himself by sending the Bacchants, who tore him in pieces.[11] The mere fact that Æschylus availed himself of this legend leads us to suppose that it belonged to the very sacred Orphic traditions, which the great writer was in a position to know, having been himself initiated into the mysteries. We may, therefore, regard this legend as directly derived from Orphism, and we feel entitled to use it in trying to understand the death of the prophet. To me, it seems that the death of Orpheus was connected with his passing from the mere cult of Dionysus to the cult of Helios, in other words, to a god who must have appeared strange and alien to his first followers; and that he was killed by his own followers who did not agree with his new religious tendencies. The myth, of course, attributed this vengeance to the divine wrath, but we have no reason for

doubting that behind the mythical veil there may be some historical truth. The death of Orpheus may thus be explained with some degree of assurance as a consequence of his abandoning his old Thracian fanatic religion in favor of the new policy of reconciliation with Greek religion. A revolt of his former disciples, incapable of agreeing with these ideals, is a very probable fact, not unusual at all in the history of religions.

At any rate, I think that only after having come to terms with Greek religion, was Orphism able to meet the needs and demands of a society which was very far from Thracian savagery. It was then possible for it to gain official entry into Greece. The age which witnessed this great upheaval was that of Peisistratus. This great politician, born about 600 B.C., died in 527. He was the son of Hippocrates, a relative of Solon. In 561 he became tyrant of Athens; he was obliged to leave Athens after a short time, but a little later, a second endeavor was more successful, and made him permanent master of the city. His rule marks one of the most prominent ages of Greek culture, owing to the great change brought by him into the whole public life.

For our present purpose I wish merely to emphasize the enormous importance of the rule of Peisistratus for Greek religion. He built the Lenaion and the Eleusinion; he enlarged and improved the Panathenaic festivals; he gave a new splendor to the theatrical performances which had in his age a deep religious character.[12] But I wish especially to dwell upon the mystic back-

ground of this revival. Or rather, it seems more reasonable to think that Peisistratus was clever enough, like every far-sighted ruler, to take advantage of the religious revival witnessed by his age, for political purposes. Certainly the mystic trend of the Peisistratean reformation is clear. The mere fact that he built a Lenaion and rebuilt the Eleusinion is proof that he had a particular interest in the Dionysiac and Eleusinian religions. We know, on the other hand, that on the Acropolis a collection of oracles was preserved;[13] and the fact that, according to some traditions, Onomacritus, the famous Orphic leader, was exiled by Peisistratus on the charge of having falsified some oracles of Musæus[14] shows what great importance the Athenian society of his time attached to oracles. In this dominant wave of mysticism lies the explanation of the fact that Orphics played the leading part in editing the text of the Homeric poems. But this point I shall consider later.

Now I pass on to the connection between the Orphic and the Eleusinian mysteries. I think that this great event, which led both Orphism and Eleusinianism into new lines, took place in the age of Peisistratus and constituted one of his most decisive reformations. The Eleusinian mysteries had their center at Eleusis, a little city near Athens. They consisted originally in some agricultural ceremonies which centered around the myth of Demeter and of the loss of her daughter, Persephone, ravished by Pluto and carried by him into the realm of the dead. According to the Hymn to Demeter, the nu-

cleus of which belongs to the eighth century, the goddess, wandering throughout the world in search of her lost daughter, came to Eleusis and was hospitably received by the Eleusinian king, Celeus. In order to reward him she instructed Celeus himself and Triptolemus and Eumolpus in agriculture, and in remembrance of this fact she instituted her sacred orgies, which gave blessedness to the initiates.

It seems that the Eleusinian mysteries had no professedly ecstatic character and that they consisted mainly in a commemoration of Demeter's deeds and especially of her recovery of her beloved daughter. In its earliest years Eleusis was free and constituted a little realm ruled by the dynasty of the Eumolpidai. The legend tells of a war between Athens and Eleusis, which was won by King Erechtheus, who conquered the little town and annexed it to Athenian territory. It seems that this war has no historical foundation at all; at any rate there is no doubt that in a very early age Eleusis belonged to the Athenian kingdom, and that the Eleusinian mysteries formed one of the chief religious interests of the Athenian state. In fact, the state very early took up the administration of the mysteries, which from that time on were enacted under the guidance of state officials and attained an unusual importance in Greek state religion. The Eleusinian sanctuary, whose very ancient walls belong to the prehistoric age, was often destroyed and rebuilt until Pericles had it splendidly enlarged and improved by Ictinus, the architect of

the Parthenon. Eleusis never witnessed any interruption of the mystery ceremonies outside of a short period during the reign of Jovianus. Quite unaffected by political events, this remarkable institution lasted from the seventh century B.C. to 396 A.D., when the monks of Alaric's host destroyed the sanctuary.

The Eleusinian mysteries consisted of two distinct periods of festivals. The first one enacted in Agra, a suburb of Athens, was named the Lesser mysteries, and was centered about the myth of Zagreus, whose deeds were re-enacted there.[15] The second one, called the Greater mysteries, whose basis was the story of Demeter, was celebrated in Eleusis. Both mysteries, Lesser and Greater, constituted a single initiatory process, the Lesser mysteries consisting in a preparation which was considered an indispensable step to become worthy to be fully initiated at Eleusis.[16] An important point is that the Lesser mysteries were undoubtedly derived from Orphism,[17] since the myth of Dionysus which formed the pivot of the Lesser mysteries certainly points to Orphism.

Thus we find both Orphic and Eleusinian religions closely allied in the Eleusinian mysteries during historical times. When did this alliance take place? I think in the age of Peisistratus. And I shall give my reasons for thinking that the Orphics of Athens, after having attained a leading part in the city, availed themselves of the religious policy of Peisistratus to achieve their religious aims. These aims consisted, as is custom-

ary for priesthoods when they attempt to ensure the prosperous career of their religion, in connecting it as closely as possible with state institutions and by putting it thereby on a political footing. The Athenian institution best adapted for this purpose was the Eleusinian mysteries. No wonder then that the Orphics did their best to put their seal on this famous institution; and they succeeded. In fact, the connection with the mysteries of Eleusis did more than any other later means to elevate Orphism in public opinion and to surround it with a halo of holiness. The Eleusinian mysteries became the best safeguard, in the eyes of the Greeks, for this religion which appeared to them so alien and strange; through them Orphism got its Greek citizenship.

Another unequalled opportunity was afforded to the Orphic priesthood by the editing of the Homeric poems. Scholars generally are now in agreement about the so-called Peisistratean version of the Homeric poems. This is not to be taken to mean that, as earlier scholars assumed, the text of the Homeric poems was first written down in the age of Peisistratus, but that the Homeric poems, which of course had long before been written, were then collected, revised and ordered. At any rate, there is no doubt that the Orphics did not neglect this splendid opportunity. And the best proof of their really extraordinary cleverness is that, according to the traditions, three out of four members of the commission appointed by Peisistratus for this revision were Orphics.[18]

It is no wonder that the Orphics took such an interest in the Homeric revision. As a matter of fact, the Homeric poems contained, in the eleventh book of the Odyssey, a unique occasion for bringing the Orphic ideas before the Greek people and for spreading them all over Greece under the guarantee of the Homeric poems. In the second chapter, I tried to discriminate the original account of the *Nekyomantheia* from the Orphic interpolated vision. We may now consider the reasons why the Orphics ventured to undertake such a huge falsification.

I have emphasized the differences between the Homeric and the Orphic notions of the after-life, showing what a sharp contrast lay between the Homeric and the Orphic eschatology. I think that the origin of the Orphic notions, as illustrated by the Katabasis of the Odyssey and by the tales and accounts of Pindar, Plato and others, will become clear if we try to connect it with the Minoan ideas of the after-life, as illustrated by funeral monuments. In the first stage of Minoan civilization the dead were buried in the house itself, as was customary among the ancient Romans, in order not to break the bond supposed still to exist between the dead and the living. Afterwards all the dead were buried together in natural or artificial grottos, in order to preserve their interrelations. This rite points to the idea, perhaps not very clear or conscious, that the dead maintained something of their earthly energy and essence after death, and somehow belonged, in spite of death,

to the world of the living. Out of this vague notion developed the conception of the after-life as a continuation of the earthly life, wherein the dead retain their needs, longings, and wishes. The royal tombs of Isopata, the so-called treasuries of Minyas at Orchomenus and of Atreus at Mycenæ, are magnificent buildings containing everything that might be of use to the dead: lamps, braziers, tools, oxidian, terra-cotta statuettes of slaves. Sometimes servants were killed and buried with their lord that they might continue to serve him.[19] The painted sarcophagus of Hagia Triada [20] conforms perfectly to the archeological findings, because it shows a dead person represented as living and attending to the funeral rites and receiving the offerings of the living. Between this conception of the after-life and the after-life as depicted by the original Homeric *Nekyia* there is a great difference. According to Homer the souls are poor, feeble beings, devoid of every possibility of enjoying any life whatever because they have no bodies; they are like smoke or shadows; they cannot be grasped, touched or embraced. Of course, bodily pleasure can not exist without a body; for the souls as pictured in the Homeric *Nekyomantheia,* jewels, arms, food and servants are useless and meaningless things. No Greek of the Homeric age had ever thought of offering jewels or arms to a dead person who was conceived as nothing but a shadow or smoke.

We may recall the funeral of Patroclus, which really points to quite another line of thought.[21] The dead

friend, who appears to Achilles during his sleep, resembles the former living hero [22] and requires a funeral in order to be allowed to enter into Hades. Accordingly Achilles builds a huge pyre on which he lays Patroclus' body; oxen and sheep are slain and the best portions of their bodies are put beside the corpse. Many vases of oil and honey are also placed around the body, with four horses and two large pet dogs. At last Achilles slays twelve young Trojan warriors and throws them on the pyre. In my opinion the account of the funeral of Patroclus cannot belong to the original text of the Iliad. The description of Patroclus as resembling a living warrior, the offerings of flesh, oil, honey, the gifts of horses, dogs, and prisoners, all this points to a group of beliefs which cannot be in keeping with the Homeric beliefs. Patroclus cannot be conceived as a shadow or as smoke if he is described as similar in shape and in dress to the living, and if he is supposed to enjoy the luxurious offerings of victims, food, horses and dogs. In my opinion the account of the funeral of Patroclus savors of a conception which was originally alien to the Homeric notions of the after-life. Surely there is a sharp contradiction between the funeral of Patroclus and the description of the souls in the Homeric *Nekyomantheia.* The funeral of Patroclus sounds perfectly Minoan. The conception of the dead hero as a powerful warrior who enjoys the offerings of horses and dogs is perfectly in line with the tombs of Minyas at Orchomenus.

This realistic notion of the after-life, which allows the dead to enjoy gifts and offerings, conforms with the Orphic after-life notions as illustrated by the Homeric vision of Odysseus, and the descriptions of Plato and Pindar. At the bottom of these splendid fantasies lies an idea which is very close to those suggested by the funeral of Patroclus and by the Mycenæan tombs, a realistic notion which considers life after death as a continuation or a repetition of the earthly life. This notion which was at its very outset alien to the Greek world, belonged, in my opinion, to the pre-Greek culture, in other words, to the early Minoan civilization, or, if one prefers, to a pre-Minoan stage of culture.

There is no doubt that this idea, wherever it arose, marked a huge upheaval in the ideas of the after-life current in Greece. The notion of an after-life which compelled men to consider death as a dreadful event, and starting point of a hideous existence,[23] was succeeded by a notion which brought men to a greater sympathy towards death, and to look upon the fatal moment, if not with pleasure, at least with some resignation, arising from the conviction that also in the after-life many earthly pleasures can be enjoyed.

Then, too, the Homeric ideas of the after-life implied no notion of retribution; good and wicked alike become equally poor and powerless beings. Conversely, the Orphic conception involved the notion of judgment after death. Minos must not be taken to represent a superior, other-worldly justice; this mistake was often

made by the Greeks themselves.[24] The judicial activity of Minos is no different from the hunting activity of Orion; he is a judge in the after-life because he was a judge on the earth, just as Orion goes on with his hunting because he was a great hunter on earth. But aside from Minos, who conveys a wrong impression of an after-life judgment, Odysseus sees Tantalus and Sisyphus and Tityus, who serve their sentence for having offended the gods. In other words, taking for granted that this justice consists really in a personal vengeance of the gods, more than in a general law of retribution, no one could deny that the presence of the punished heroes presupposes the notion that in the hereafter man will suffer the consequences of his earthly behavior. In other words, it is assumed that the after-life is conditioned by our deeds. This notion, which is only suggested in the Odyssey and relates only to a few particular cases, soon became a general notion of retribution, openly assumed by Plato. The Orphic interpolation impressed on the Homeric account a quite different character. The *Nekyomantheia,* the story of a terrifying adventure of Odysseus, became an account of the after-life, based upon what Odysseus himself claimed to have seen.

The immense religious bearing of this transformation can be appreciated only when it is viewed with Greek eyes, when the Homeric poems are read in the spirit of the sixth and fifth century Greeks. For them the Homeric poems were a religious book. Herodotus says

that Homer gave the Greeks their ideas about the gods, their attributes, and their names.[25] The Homeric poems constituted practically the sole source of religious conceptions and thoughts for the Greek. The Greeks always considered them to be a source of truth. That is why Plato condemned the use of the Homeric poems for educational purposes. From this viewpoint we can easily understand that the vision of Odysseus must have made a very deep impression on Greek minds. It was not a mere tale, it was an objective account of a man who said: I have seen the dead and have spoken with them. With my own eyes I have seen Achilles and Orion and Heracles, quite similar to living beings; I have seen Tantalus and Tityus and Sisyphus and Minos. And this man who claimed to have seen with his own eyes all these things was Odysseus, the most revered of the Greek heroes. The primitive savage sorcery, consisting fundamentally in the act of drawing souls out of Hades by offering them the blood they needed, became the dread account of an after-life vision, doubtless the first account of this sort which the Greeks had ever heard.

Why had the Orphics attached such importance to the spreading of their eschatology among the Greek people as to have recourse to such a bold fraud? Because eschatology was the cornerstone of the whole Orphic religious building. The concreteness of the after-life was closely connected with the Orphic conception of blessedness. Their idea of a material blessedness, con-

*Above:* The pinax of Ninnion, a painted terra-cotta slab from Athens, showing Ninnion dancing before Kore and Demeter. The dance represents a rite in the Dionysian liturgy.

*Below:* An Attic red-figured vase, showing the preparations for a satyr dance performed by masked young men in the presence of Dionysus and Ariadne. Another painting illustrating a liturgy. (Naples, National Museum.)

*Above:* Apulian vase, with scenes of the after-life derived from Orphic traditions; in the middle, Hades and Persephone; around, Orpheus, Tantalus, Heracles, Sisyphus and the judges.
*Below:* Marble relief found in Tarent, with representations of scenes in the after-life very similar to those on painted vases.

sisting chiefly in the satisfaction of the human longings and desires which man cannot usually achieve in his lifetime—a conception of blessedness which still lies at the bottom of the average mind—required a thoroughly realistic notion of the after-life. It was vain to try to attract men who believed that the souls were nothing but shadows without the possibility of enjoying any material pleasure whatever, by promising after-life banquets and sports and dances. It was, therefore, necessary to lead men into a new line of thought, to introduce life into the after-life, to bring people to think that it was worth while to become initiated. Realism was the cornerstone of the Orphic promise. After all, the same thing happens when a modern man keeps to his Christian belief because it ensures his meeting his parents and children in the other world.

From another point of view as well, the Orphics had good reason to attach great importance to their ideas. As stated above, their eschatology included retribution; in other words, one's fate after death somehow depended upon one's conduct here. For, by assuming that blessedness was a privilege consequent on being initiated, the Orphics were committed to the more general doctrine that destiny hereafter depends on good will here. This privilege, however low it may have been, in the earliest times constituted the starting point for a wholly different conception of life, one which Plato was to develop to its ultimate consequences.

We can now understand why descriptions of the

after-life were always a favorite subject of Orphism. The Katabasis, that is, the account of what a trustworthy man had seen in the world of the dead, provided a guarantee for the truth of the whole Orphic creed. Apart from this realistic conception of the after-life the Orphic creed had no meaning at all. The Orphics never had a better opportunity than the one supplied by the revision of the Homeric poems for bringing the Orphic creed before the Greeks, thus availing themselves of the immeasurable authority of the Homeric poems and of the name of Homer himself. Had they tried to diffuse their ideas directly by means of their own books or descriptions, most probably only a few would have accepted them. Thanks to this audacious trick, which the Greeks never noticed,[26] the Homeric conception of the other world was submerged by Orphic ideas, and these spread with the diffusion of the Homeric poems, until the Orphic eschatology had traveled all over Greece. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon this great diffusion of Orphic ideas due to the immense popularity of the Odyssey. The *Nekyia,* painted by Polygnotus and Nicias,[27] the Greek painting from which the southern Italian infernal paintings were derived, the countless descriptions of the infernal rivers, of the infernal judges, of the beatitude of Elysium, which furnished favorite subjects to all ranks of Greek and Roman writers, were derived ultimately from the Orphic descriptions.

Now take into consideration the effect of this up-

heaval on the pessimistic trait of the Greeks. Notwithstanding their fondness for beauty and joy, the Greeks have always been thoroughly pessimistic. Their pessimism had its root in fatalism. Greek religious thought left no room for human will, everything being determined beforehand for good or for evil, beyond human will and effort. Gods themselves are free only within the limits fixed by the Moirai. Hence the uselessness of every human endeavor to change one's life into a new and better life; hence the sad pessimism which is one of the most salient features of Greek writers and poets. Simonides of Amorgus and Simonides of Ceos found unusually forceful expressions for this pessimism, being destitute of all hope, perfectly aware that Zeus governs all things in accordance with his own caprice, without the least regard for human needs and wishes. The same idea is expounded by Sophocles and Herodotus, who conceive life as a useless chain of sad and unjust events.[28] What awaits man at the end of his earthly career? That is the chief problem to be answered. The Greek had no answer for it. According to the Homeric conceptions, the Greek had a merely negative notion of the after-life. Theognis says: "I enjoy youth and amuse myself, since after death I shall lie under the earth like a mute stone and I shall see nothing." More closely related to Homeric notions are the words of Sappho: "Afterwards you will lie dead and nothing will remain of you, but you shall be obliged to wander aimlessly in the home of Hades, among the dead

phantoms." Æschylus and Sophocles expound the same ideas. The sorrows and wrongs of life did not find any compensation in the after-life. The Greek had never learned to look upon death as the starting point of a new life which would somehow right the wrongs of this. Death marked only a continuation and a final proof of the uselessness of every human longing for peace and justice. The only conclusion which the Greek could draw from this absolute pessimism was that it is wise and good to indulge bodily desires and to enjoy life as far as possible. Thus the Epicurean notion of life, when considered in the light of Greek thought, appears more tragic and profound than it is generally supposed to be.

Orphism also had a pessimistic conception of life. Moreover its pessimism had a doctrinal foundation which made it particularly consistent, since it assumed that mankind was obliged to serve sentence during his earthly life for the sin of the Titans, a sin which mankind had never committed.

In other words, the sorrows and misfortunes of this life, which the Greek explained by the blind will of Moira, were connected by Orphism with an original atonement for the sins of others. But for this inevitable unhappiness, which bears a striking resemblance to the Adamic original sin of Christians, Orphism suggested means which, though it offered no escape from the earthly destiny, made it possible to look to the end of the earthly career as to a triumph; this means was

the initiation. Thanks to it, mankind was enabled to regard the after-life not as a continuation of a fatal injustice, but as a termination of the sad human lot, as a passing from a world of sadness and sorrows to a world of happiness. In other words, the Orphics transformed death into the only ground for enduring suffering in this life. The common Greek proverb, repeatedly quoted by the gnomic and tragic poets, that for men the best thing is to die, received another meaning in the interpretation of Plutarch, when he wrote to Apollonius to comfort him at the death of his son. Here the meaning was that the best thing for men to do is to die in order to get the reward for their earthly sufferings as soon as possible.[29]

Orphism thus became a primary element in Greek culture, and constituted one of the most important spiritual upheavals which history has ever witnessed.

## CHAPTER VIII

# ORPHISM AND GREEK PHILOSOPHY

As repeatedly pointed out, the influence of Orphism was purely religious and philosophical; it lacked the imaginative endowment necessary to make an impression on art. Art was the proper sphere of the state religion, but conversely, philosophy was from its very beginnings deeply under Orphic influences. Scholars are not in agreement about the direction and extent of this influence: on the one hand, it is asserted that the whole pre-Socratic philosophy arose from mystic sources; on the other hand, the rationalistic trend of Greek thought seems to point to quite different conclusions. In my opinion neither view is borne out by the facts; the truth is that both currents, mystic and rationalistic, played a great part in the making of Greek philosophy. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Diogenes of Apollonia and, to a certain extent, Empedocles stand out as forerunners of Greek rationalism. Conversely, Pythagoras, Heraclitus and, to some extent, Anaxagoras show evident influences of mysticism. For our present purpose we will disregard the first trend, and center our attention on mysticism, which in the very nature of the case means Orphism.

First of all, Pythagoras. Antiquity considered Orphism and Pythagoreanism as one and the same thing.[1] But it is plain that the assumption of their real identity relates only to certain religious features, some rites which both of them undoubtedly had in common. Moreover the Pythagorean philosophy, if philosophy is here the proper term, did not survive the democratic revolt which in the fifth century broke down the Pythagorean régime in southern Italy.

In my opinion, Orphism and Pythagoreanism were far from identical. On the contrary, they are two quite different currents arising from different sources, and meeting at only one point of their careers. Pythagoreanism appears to me to have had nothing in common with Orphism at its outset, for it was a blend of politics and mysticism whose aims were very unlike those of Orphism. But on meeting Orphism, it took over the Orphic religious creed. So far as the evidence goes, there was no difference at all between Orphic and Pythagorean religious doctrines. Iamblichus is perfectly right in assuming that the link between the two currents was a theological one.[2] Like Orphism, Pythagoreanism assumed the human inheritance of the Titans' sin, for which souls are obliged to atone by being kept prisoners in the body. The Pythagorean eschatology assumed also that the wicked souls serve their sentence under the earth and that blessedness is a reward of virtue. The notions of the future blessedness attributed by the Attic comedies to the Pythagoreans conform perfectly

to the Orphic descriptions. Pythagoras was believed to have descended, like Orpheus, into Hades;[3] the Pythagorean Brontinus was said to have written a *Katabasis*.[4] Another basic point Orphism and Pythagoreanism had in common was their ascetic trend, rooted in the supposed necessity of delivering the soul from its bodily bonds as far as possible. All this leads to the conclusion that, notwithstanding their different origins, no line of demarcation existed between them in respect to religion; they had, in the last analysis, the same creed. That is why the great popularity achieved by Pythagoreanism in the fifth century resulted in an enormous diffusion of Orphism.

Pythagoreanism gained control in the fifth century over the whole of southern Italy. Centering in Croton near the seat of the Orphic necropolis, it achieved a leading position in all Greek cities and built up a peculiar aristocratic society, wherein politics and religion seem to have been very singularly entangled. In the fifth century a violent democratic revolt broke out all over southern Italy and broke down the Pythagorean rule.[5] This revolt marks the end of the Pythagorean career; its conspicuous position in southern Italy was lost forever, and the Pythagoreans were obliged to take refuge in Greece or to disappear from the stage of social life entirely. Orphism took advantage of the Pythagorean rule and, as the Orphic necropolis of Thurii indicates, felt perfectly free to follow its creed without regard to its environment. The prominent Orphics,

Brontinus, Nicias, Orpheus of Croton and Zopyrus, appear to have been contemporaries of Archytas, Philolaus and Lysis.[6]

But we must not overrate the Orphic-Pythagorean alliance. I do not think that Orphism would ever have put its seal upon Greek thought had its links with philosophy been limited to Pythagoreanism. The actual entrance of Orphism into Greek speculation and into the history of world philosophy is really marked by Heraclitus.

Antiquity had no doubt at all about the Orphic origin of the Heraclitean philosophy. The chief authority is Aristotle himself, who asserts that Plato's philosophy contained some elements derived from the philosophy of the Italians, and that Plato before becoming Socrates' disciple had followed the philosophy of Cratylus and Heraclitus.[7] Granted that this reference to the philosophy of the Italians means the Orphic-Pythagorean philosophy, since no other explanation is plausible, this assertion testifies to the Orphic origin of the Heraclitean philosophy. Plutarch attributes the *ekpyrosis* (that is, the final destruction of the world by fire) both to Orpheus and to Heraclitus.[8] Plato finds the source of the Heraclitean doctrine of the eternal passing of things in the Orphic theogony.[9] Clement of Alexandria attests the Orphic parentage of most of the theories of Heraclitus.[10] It is worth while to note how Clement arrives at this conclusion. In order to give support to his favorite notion that the Greeks were devoid

of originality and derived their philosophy from the Hebrews, he starts from the assumption that for the Greeks it was customary to borrow words and thoughts from one another. After having alleged many instances, he says: "I pass over in silence Heraclitus, who borrowed almost all things from Orpheus." In other words, Clement seems to refer to a well-known fact about which there was no doubt. At any rate, the mere fact that Heraclitus belonged to a royal family, which was endowed with an hereditary Eleusinian priesthood,[11] confirmed the supposition that he could not be indifferent to the mystery ideas.

In the light of this evidence, it is easy to grasp the real meaning of an epigram which asserts that Heraclitus' philosophy, although really dark, becomes quite clear if an initiate leads the way.[12] All this leads to the inference that there was a direct connection between the philosophy of Heraclitus and the Orphic theology.

We are informed about these Orphic elements, thanks to the fragments preserved by Hippolytus, a Christian apologist who in the third century A.D. had a leading part in Rome, and wrote a refutation of all heresies.[13] His refutation consists in giving a demonstration that no one of the heresies of his time could claim to be truly Christian, but that all of them were nothing but pagan philosophy reclothed in Christian garb. There is no need to enter into the details of this apologetic system; the only heresy which requires our attention is the sect founded by Nœtus,[14] who identified Father and Son

and was vigorously opposed by Hippolytus. In order to reveal the real content of this heresy, the apologist compares it with the Heraclitean philosophy and concludes that Nœtianism was nothing other than pure Heraclitean philosophy.[15] In order to prove his case he goes back to the work of the philosopher himself, singling out a series of sayings which in his opinion substantiate his assumption.[16]

Without doubt Hippolytus knew Heraclitus' work, which is lost to us;[17] especially the third chapter, the so-called *Logos Theologikos* (Theological Discourse) which contained the theological system of the Ephesian philosopher.[18] Thanks to Hippolytus, who had no interest at all in Heraclitean philosophy and intended only to prove the heathen content of this would-be Christian heresy, we are in a position to reconstruct the famous theological discourse of Heraclitus. I shall single out some important fragments in order to prove that Orphic theology is the key to the Heraclitean philosophy, and that the epigram referred to above is perfectly correct in that the guidance of an initiate is the right avenue for the understanding of Heraclitus.

Let us, for instance, take one of the most discussed fragments, fragment 52.[19] *Aion is a child playing dice and jesting; the kingdom is the child's.* Scholars agree that Heraclitus, in the image of a child playing dice, characterizes the capricious changes of destiny, without taking into consideration the fact that for Heraclitus the eternal passing of things from one condition to an-

other is a divine law which may by no means be compared with childish play. If we turn to the Orphic theology we find that there was a god who was imagined as a boy, called Aion, playing with dice, who later received the kingdom of the world. This boy was Dionysus, whose attention the Titans diverted by means of dice, and who, in spite of his youth, received the kingdom from Zeus after his resurrection.[20] The proof that the doctrines of the Orphic mysteries included this myth is furnished by Clement, who mentions the *astragolos,* that is, the dice, among the symbols which were showed to the initiates.[21] And Aion was the Orphic name of Dionysus.[22] It is idle to waste time showing how far from this very simple theological explanation are those philosophical interpretations current among scholars.

Another fragment which supplied scholars with excellent opportunity to display their wit, reads:[23] *Immortal mortals, mortal immortals, living their death, dying their life.* No saying of Heraclitus has been more subjected to every kind of interpretation than this fragment. Some scholars connect it with an identification of death and life; others with the notion of the everlasting passing of things; others with the alternation of birth and death. No one was sincere enough to declare that, as far as our knowledge goes, this fragment means nothing. But if you consider it in the light of the mysteries, you will at once grasp its inner meaning. "Mortal immortals" refers perfectly to Zagreus, who was a god and nevertheless died; "immortal mortals"

who "live in accordance with their death" are the initiates who attain immortality through initiation, although they are mortal beings and die with the dying god, Zagreus; and the "mortal immortals who die in accordance with their life" refers to Zagreus, who dies like a mortal human being. Nothing is simpler and clearer than this famous fragment if only you follow the suggestion of the epigram referred to above and take an initiate as a guide.

Another fragment which has always been considered as a philosophical riddle is the following: *We ought to throw away corpses like dung.*[24] In all the imaginable explanations, more or less appealing, which this fragment has received, none could explain why the body appears so despicable to Heraclitus. I think that a very simple explanation is offered by the Orphic funeral rite which consisted in the destruction of the body by fire, in order to free the soul completely from its bodily prison and to make possible its entrance into the world of the dead to enjoy the beatitude of the initiates. The annihilation of the body involved the destruction of the Titanic sin inherited by mankind and dwelling in the body. Hence the idea that the body is something low and despicable which men must cast off as soon as possible, instead of burying it and supplying it with jewels, clothes, meals, etc., as was customary with the Greeks.

To the after-life blessedness two other fragments allude, which seem to me quite clear if we consider them in the light of Orphism. I mean fragment 26:[25] *The*

*man lights a light for himself in the night, when he dies; when alive he reaches the dead by sleeping, having his eyes closed; awake he reaches the sleeping.* And fragment 27 (2): *Dying man awaits something which he neither expects nor thinks.* It is quite clear that for the Orphics death marks the beginning of a new light, of a new knowledge, because it discloses to man the divine world of the blessed, and the Orphics believed that in the after-life man meets things which he can neither imagine nor hope for. It seems to me that these sayings of Heraclitus contain one of the highest expressions of Orphic hopes.

I do not need to add other instances in order to show the Orphic content of the Heraclitean philosophy. But I must point out its thoroughly theological content. This theological or, if you prefer, mythological character will confuse anyone who, following the historians of philosophy, is accustomed to consider Heraclitus as the most modern of the ancient philosophers, with regard to his theory of the oneness of contradictories, refusing to attribute a permanent value to anything and paving the way to relativism. Many will ask how it happened that this Orphic theologian played such a prominent part in the formation of the Hegelian philosophy and appeared to Schleiermacher and to Lassalle worthy of exhaustive study. To be sure, there is an apparent contradiction between Heraclitus' theology and his mind. His theology was old but his mind, modern; nothing reflects old thoughts and beliefs more than his connections with the

primitive myth of Zagreus, but nothing appears more modern than the idea of the eternal alternation of birth and death which this old myth suggested to him. Like Orphism itself, Heraclitus was at the same time old and modern; deeply rooted in the past, he yet belongs to the future. Onomacritus, the old Orphic collector of oracles, and Lassalle, the philosopher of revolutions, could both consider him as their master. Without doubt he was a pure product of the mystery; his idea of knowledge agreed thoroughly with the mystic process of ecstasy. Rationalism was perfectly alien to him. The source of his knowledge was not reflection but intuition.

It is not easy to exaggerate the influence exerted upon Heraclitus' thought by the mysteries. His whole philosophy is in the last analysis an outcome of the mystic experience. His amazing doctrine of the oneness of opposite states and of the eternal passing of things can be explained only in the light of the mysteries. Owing to his gigantic philosophic gifts, the crude, primitive myth of Zagreus became the starting point of the most modern of ancient philosophical theories, quite worthy of acceptance and admiration by Hegel, Schleiermacher and Lassalle. Due to his emphasis on intuition, Heraclitus stands out as an exception among Greek thinkers whose birthmark was rationalism. In the history of Greek thought Heraclitus stands alone; he had no followers. Atomists, Sophists, Academics, Stoics, all of them stand upon intellectual foundations; they assumed that the human mind is able to attain truth

through a logical process. Heraclitus, on the other hand, asserted that the avenue to truth is emotion. For Greece he was an outsider. But for this very reason Christianity accorded him warm admiration. Nœtus, who founded his heresy on the Heraclitean notion of the eternal triumph of life over death and transferred to Christ the doctrines suggested to Heraclitus by the myth of Zagreus and did justice to him and our modern thought, refusing to abide by a fixed truth and considering life and history as an eternal passing from one state to another, recognizes in Heraclitus the most modern of ancient thinkers.

No other Greek philosopher was so deeply influenced by Orphism. Nevertheless there is no doubt that Orphism exerted some influence over other pre-Socratic philosophers. Empedocles [26] derived from Orphism his ideas of the world-palingenesis,[27] the formation of the human body,[28] the cosmic myth of the world,[29] and availed himself very often of quotations from Orphic writings.[30] Parmenides seems to have derived the birth of the gods from Orphism and made use of the Orphic language.[31] But no one would maintain that the philosophies of Empedocles or Parmenides had Orphic foundations.

The second great step in Orphism's career was Plato. On careful analysis, Plato's philosophy appears to be a purified and enlarged Orphism.[32] The central doctrine of the eschatologic myths of Plato, the existence of the soul before life, the punishments and reincarnation

which Plato introduces not as products of his thought but as revelations of ancient prophets, are rooted in Orphism. It seems to me very probable that all Platonic after-life myths are derived from an Orphic Katabasis.

About the Orphic origin of the Platonic after-life myths, there can be no doubt, since these myths agree in the main points with the golden leaflets of Thurii, where the basic points of Platonic doctrine are found, such as the divine origin of souls, the sorrowful cycle of beings, the atonement for original sin, the fields of the blessed. But I would not set much store by these points of agreement, which after all indicate merely common myths. What seems to me worth serious consideration is the Platonic evaluation of myths which savors of primitive mentality.

In Plato's mind myth and truth are one and the same thing. Myth relates to another world quite different from this earthly world but by no means less real and actual. In other words, myth is not for him, as for us, the product of imagination, but a way to truth, a means for attaining knowledge. Plato entertains no doubt at all about the objective truth of myths. In the *Gorgias,* in order to prove that it is the greatest misfortune for a man to go into Hades with a soul burdened with sin, he tells a myth, pointing out that what he is about to tell is to be taken as true.[88] In other words, the Platonic myth (*mythos*) which is a subjective reality, appears to be a *logos,* that is, an objective reality. At the end of the *Phædo,* Socrates tells the well-known

after-life myth and assumes that, owing to the fact that this myth corresponds more or less to truth, it is good for men to take it into consideration.[84]

Another instance of the mythical origin of Platonic truth is supplied by the *Meno,* where Socrates expounds his well-known theory of recollection. The final argument by which Socrates claims to refute Meno's objections is the fact that some priests taught that souls are immortal and bound to periodical rebirths; hence the possibility of knowledge consisting in a recollection of things viewed in a precedent life.[85] On closer scrutiny, the main points of Plato's thought rest not on logical foundations at all, but on *mythos.* All this makes us take Plato's realism into account.

In common opinion, Plato's name is closely connected with idealism; no one would ever doubt that Plato should rank with idealistic philosophers, or, more precisely, that idealism had its very source in the Platonic philosophy. But I think that at the basis of this assumption lies a misunderstanding arising from the difference between the meaning which the word *idea* has in the Platonic philosophy and in modern philosophy. For us an idea means an activity of our mind which has no objective existence comparable to the existence of other things. According to Plato, an idea was something which actually existed; the word itself, coming from the root *idein,* which means *to see,* points to something which exists outside of our thought.[86] Sometimes Plato imagines these ideas as existing in a celestial place,[87]

sometimes he thinks of them more abstractly. The ideas constitute a world seen by souls before their embodiment, and to think means nothing other than to recollect the idea seen beforehand. According to Plato's system, there is no possibility of thinking in the modern sense of the word; people can only recollect ideas, whose existence has no connection at all with the human mind, but since they actually exist, can be seen and recollected. They are, in the last analysis, things. The idea of a table is no different from a table; the idea of a horse no different from a horse; and so on. To every object corresponds its *idea,* in other words, its shape or existence. Hence the existence of two distinct worlds equally real and objective: the world of things and the world of ideas. In other words, the so-called Platonic idealism is only an absolute realism, according to which everything that man thinks is endowed with objectivity. Hence the realistic conception of myths and visions.

I have assumed that realism constitutes the distinguishing mark of primitive thought, and have insisted that the Greeks never wholly overcame this primitive trait; hence the realistic valuation of visions and dreams. Applying these considerations to Plato, we can see that he stands on a perfectly primitive footing in his attitude towards myths and ideas. Convincing proof of the primitive character of the Platonic theory of ideas is accorded by the surprising fact, well known since the eighteenth century, that the Platonic theory of ideas bears an astonishing resemblance to certain primi-

tive beliefs. The explorer, Josè d'Acosta, stated in the eighteenth century that the Indians of Peru believed that there is a world constituted of the prototypes of things. A quite similar idea was found by Lafiteau among North American Indians. Samoans and Finns held the same belief.[38] All this leads to the conclusion that the Platonic theory of ideas is to be regarded as the outcome or survival of a very ancient belief which he merely developed and improved.

There is abundant reason for thinking that Orphism transmitted this notion to Plato. Let us consider, for instance, how Plato understands ecstasy. In his opinion sensations cannot give knowledge of truth. Truth can be reached only when the soul rids itself as far as possible of the bodily obstacles. Properly speaking, this deliverance can be reached only by death, which constitutes the only avenue to truth, because only death delivers the soul from the body. But in life it is possible to achieve knowledge by means of catharsis, which is a temporary deliverance from the body.[39] In other words, for Plato as for Heraclitus, knowledge was a real process, a change consisting in an egress of the soul from the body. That is why visions are real happenings which afford real knowledge of the after-life, and which constitute a reinstatement of what men think or surmise. All this bears the most evident stamp of the mystery ideas.

Hence Plato's philosophy appears to be constituted of two different elements: the first one is the Socratic

criticism, the second is mysticism. We know the origin of Platonic mysticism. According to Aristotle, he derived it from the Pythagorean philosophers of southern Italy, in other words, from Orphism. But Aristotle adds that in the furtherance of his mental development Plato abandoned the so-called Italian theory, being aware that it was not able to achieve universal concepts; in other words, it did not furnish any explanation as to the origin of ideas. That means, translated into modern words, that Plato became aware that realism was not the true avenue for reaching any explanation whatever of ideas, understood as products of a mental activity, for since, according to realism, there are no ideas at all, but only things, there is no possibility of thinking but only of observing. Furthermore, taking for granted that ideas and things are one and the same, it concludes that there is no room for universal concepts, in other words, for unchangeable, definite, fixed ideas, because things are changeable, and ideas must perforce be changeable, due to this connection with things. To take an instance, if you are able only to perceive dogs but not to conceive the idea of the dog, you will have only a complex of ever-changing notions of different, really existing dogs but never the universal concept which the word *dog* implies. That is why, if I am right, Plato abandoned the Orphic Pythagorean ideas and turned to the Socratic rationalism.

Here he found what the religious emotions and intuitions had never furnished; I mean a logical inquiry

into the world of ideas. Now he dealt no more with religion but with philosophy, with a clear, precise philosophy. But again he found himself face to face with a difficulty. Socratic rationalism was no more able than Orphic mysticism to justify itself. Socrates was gifted with a wonderful inquiring power but he belonged in the last analysis to the Sophists. He was a Sophist who applied his mental curiosity to high spiritual interests, but he was unable to justify his ideas in any absolute way. This essential weakness of the Socratic philosophy was especially clear in respect to ethics. Socrates was very clever in clearing away distorted or ill-defined ideas but he did not furnish a moral standard of judgment for particular things. He was capable of inquiry into virtue but he did not show a practical path to virtue, and in the last analysis, he identified virtue with knowledge, and assumed that the more man knows the more virtuous he is, an assumption which could never become a practical rule for life. Where lay the source of this moral weakness of the Socratic philosophy? In the absence of all religious content, for although Socrates might have been very religious, the Socratic philosophy is but a new inquiry into the world of ideas. No one could live up to Socratic notions. It is quite possible to consider Socrates as a model of a virtuous life, but it is quite impossible to consider Socratic philosophy as a rule for a virtuous life.

Plato, realizing the moral weakness of Socratic speculation, which supplied man with marvelous tools but

not with ethical standards, went back to religion to give Socratic speculation a practical basis. He combined the Orphic religion with the Socratic philosophy. He brought into Sophistic rationalism the deep religious feeling of Orphism. Philosophy became something sacred, and spoke with the solemn certitude of prophecy. The main interests of the human soul, the feeling of sin, of weakness, the need for salvation, the longing for reward, which had found no satisfaction in the Socratic philosophy, now received adequate consideration. Man learned now that virtue cannot be attained through knowledge but through atonement for original sin. Hence the great importance of Orphism. Initiation became a sacrament: it was no longer a magical operation but a means by which men attained that knowledge which no philosophy could furnish. The mystery thus became very similar to the Eucharist; and the eucharistic sacrament may rightly be regarded as the final step and fulfilment of mystic development.

This, in my opinion, was the function of Orphism in regard to Platonism. In short, it played the part of faith toward thought. Thanks to this alliance between mysticism and rationalism, Greek philosophy was delivered from intellectualism, the highest and ultimate product of which was Socrates. For Socrates, as for the Sophists, man had been the standard of things. I do not think that the distance is very great between Protagoras and Socrates, for, granting that knowledge leads to virtue, the individual will define for himself

the degree and sort of knowledge which constitutes the real avenue to virtue, in other words, the nature of virtue. Human intelligence is no longer the standard of judgment. Above human intelligence there are eternal truths; there is a sin for which people must atone, there is an after-life which awaits the living, there is a blessedness which rewards virtue and a judgment which punishes sin. All this cannot be stated in terms of the intellect, but it constitutes a complex of truths from which a religious standard of life arises. Man knows now that it is necessary to be virtuous. The alliance between mysticism and rationalism, in other words, the entrance of Orphism into Greek philosophy, marks the end of intellectualism. Heraclitus was the first champion of the Orphic war against Greek rationalism; Plato consummated the victory.

No one would assert that Plato was able to unify Orphism and rationalism. The gulf between them was never perfectly bridged; between arguments and myths there is a difference of implication and meaning which is for us only too evident. But we must not forget that Greek realism considered myths from a quite different viewpoint. Owing to this realism, a myth was no different from proof; for us this is a wrong logical method: for the Greek it constituted a final degree of knowledge. In order to understand this viewpoint you need only consider the part played by theology in scholasticism.

In the Platonic union of mysticism and rationalism, Greek philosophy once more entered the religious way.

The consequences of this huge upheaval were not immediately realized. There is no doubt that Aristotle marks a reaction against Platonic mysticism, but the further development of Greek thought showed the real nature of the Platonic transformation. I allude to the links between Platonism and Christianity. At any rate, Plato marks the end of the first period of the philosophic career of Orphism. Pythagoras, Heraclitus and Plato mark three successive stages of this wonderful career, whose importance for the history of human thought no one can overestimate.

## CHAPTER IX

# ORPHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

We come now to the third and final stage of the history of Orphism, the influence exerted by Orphism on Christianity. Between the second and the third stage, that is, between Plato and St. Paul, there is, so far as the evidence goes, a gap during which Greek thought apparently developed along lines which seem to have been alien to Orphism. Plato's philosophy, it seems, ought to be considered the last attempt of Orphism definitely to put its seal on Greek philosophy. And it seems this attempt resulted in failure, since there is no denying that the Aristotelian and post-Aristotelian philosophy mark a return to rationalism and intellectualism. But Orphism, like every religion, has two currents: along with the aristocratic current of philosophers and thinkers, of which history takes notice, runs the popular current of the man in the street, which in most cases history ignores or despises. Now, taking for granted that between the second and the third stages there was an actual gap, we may be assured that this gap related only to the aristocratic embodiment of Orphism. As a matter of fact, there is conclusive evidence that Orphism never ceased to exert its influence on the lower classes, notwithstanding the rationalistic trend of

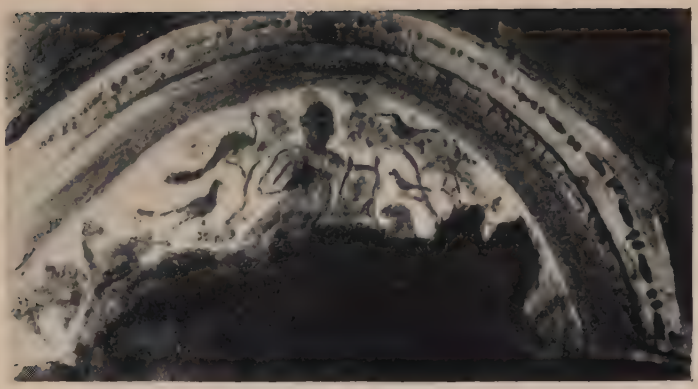
Greek philosophy.[1] Its very essence, a blend of religion and magic,[2] made the lower social classes sympathize with it. They found therein, besides redemption from sins and the promise of blessedness, a complex of magical operations against sickness and fear. Hence the tendency of Orphism to fall prey to magicians and charlatans and to cater to the baser feelings and needs.[3] All this leads us to surmise that the supposed gap between Plato and Paul is not borne out by the facts, and that, beyond the pale of philosophy, Orphism continued to exert its influence on Greek society.

Many things make us suppose that the popularity of Orphism was greater than one might think at first sight. Not to speak of Pindar, Æschylus and Plato, there is no doubt that the allusions of Aristophanes' *Frogs* to future blessedness can be explained only on the assumption that Orphic notions were well known to Greek audiences. The Orphic creed of Hippolytus in the Euripidean tragedy leads to the same conclusion, as do even more the humorous allusions of the Attic comedies.[4] All this makes us feel that history would not be true to fact if it assumed that Orphism did not last beyond the fourth century. Only by assuming that in the development of Orphism there was no interruption at all, can we explain how it happened that Orphism played a leading part in the making of Christian theology.

First of all, we must consider a basic fact, namely, the diffusion of Orphism throughout the very countries where Christianity arose. In the latter half of the first

century before Christ, Judæa was surrounded by Dionysiac religion. Phœnician coins of Sidon, Berytus and Orthosia show a divine figure like the Phœnician god Esmun represented as Dionysus.[5] The Nabatæans, whose dominion stretched from Arabia to Damascus, worshiped a god named Dusares,[6] who for many reasons which I cannot explain now seems to have been the Orphic Dionysus.[7] In the age of Jesus, Asia Minor was filled with Orphic brotherhoods named *speirai*.[8] Tarsus was very well acquainted with Orphic myths and creeds,[9] and worshiped Sandan, a dying and resurrected god who bore some resemblance to the Orphic Dionysus.[10] On the whole, Judæa was, as I said, surrounded in the last century before Christ by a Dionysiac and Orphic girdle.

But let us now take into consideration Judæa itself. Scholars are not in agreement as to the nature of the Essene sects. In my opinion, the assumption which connects Essenism with Pythagoreanism is very near the truth. At least no doubt can arise as to the kinship between Essene and Pythagorean ideas of the after-life. The Essenes assumed that the body is mortal and the soul is immortal, and that the soul, delivered from bodily bonds, goes up into the air: the good go to a pleasant place beyond the sea, and the wicked into a subterranean place of torture.[11] All this savors of Orphic beliefs. The Orphic origin of certain Essenic doctrines finds an important confirmation in the diffusion of the Dionysiac religion in Judæa. It is not easy to ex-



*Above:* A painting from the Christian catacombs, representing Orpheus with his harp. It indicates the existence of an early Christian cult of Orpheus.

*Below:* A seal which suggests the existence in the third century A.D. of a Gnostic Orphic-Christian sect. (Berlin Museum.)

plain how it happened that the Dionysiac religion found such favor among the Jews, but the fact of its astonishing diffusion is certain. The order of Antiochus Epiphanes that the Jews should participate in Dionysiac processions [12] is evidence of this. If we remember that the whole religious politics of Antiochus was aimed at the triumph of Hellenism, we must admit that the Dionysiac religion appeared to Antiochus as the most important among the heathen cults in Jerusalem, and therefore adapted to serve its ends.[13] Tacitus moreover testifies to the existence of Dionysiac rites among the Jews.[14]

We must readily admit that in this diffusion of Dionysiac religion among the Jews, Orphism played a conspicuous part. The cult of Dionysus Sabazius was well known among the Jews. A coin of Ascalon or Gaza shows Jahwe represented as Triptolemus; and Triptolemus was worshiped in Syria among the other national gods. Hence the historian must believe that the mystery religions, and especially Orphism, attained a diffusion in Judæa during the last century before Christ and in Jesus' time as well.

The whole problem of the relation between Orphism and Paulinism is surprisingly simple, notwithstanding its ramified theological and confessional implications; it consists chiefly in a comparison between the Orphic Zagreus and the Pauline Christ. The points in the myth which must be taken into consideration here are the following: 1. Zagreus is son of Zeus.[15] 2. The Titans kill him.[16] 3. Zeus calls him back to life.[17]

4. He takes him into heaven.[18] 5. He gives him the kingdom.[19] No one would deny that these points agree perfectly with the Pauline Christ, son of God, who was killed, resurrected, ascended to heaven and received the kingdom. The only point of difference is that Zagreus was torn to pieces and Christ was crucified.

Surprisingly enough, the Christians of the first century were perfectly aware of the existence of striking similarities between Zagreus and Christ, without, of course, being able to explain them in any scientific way. For Justin Martyr it seemed convenient not to pass over in silence a fact which might deeply affect the faith of Christians, and he therefore explained the points of connection between Zagreus and Christ by supposing that the commentators of ancient poets, having known through prophets the future advent of the Savior, invented the myth of Zagreus in order to make people consider the Savior himself as a mythical person. And, struck by the fact that a well-known prophecy of *Genesis,* referred by Christians to the Savior, contains some elements which undoubtedly might be connected with Dionysus, he explains this agreement by surmising that the demons had invented the passion of Dionysus according to this prophecy in order to bring Christians to doubt the Savior.[20] And he adds that the demons did not dare to take over the one thing different in the story of Christ and the myth of Dionysus, that is, the crucifixion.[21] In other words, Justin Martyr gives evidence that the Christians of the first century were perfectly

aware of a fact which some modern scholars are accustomed to deny; I mean the agreement between the myth of Dionysus and the story of Christ. Of course the explanation furnished by Justin is in line with the mentality of his time, and could not be accepted by modern scientists, but the fact that Justin noticed the resemblance and tried to explain it in some way is of critical importance for us.

The explanation must lie in the presence of Dionysiac and Orphic beliefs and trends among the Jews in the age of Jesus. On this point Justin himself testifies by saying that the demons introduced the story of Dionysus into the very country where the Savior was to come.[22] In other words, he noticed that the myth of Zagreus was widely accepted among the Jews and again finds no satisfactory explanation for this astonishing fact outside of a demoniac plan for the substitution of Zagreus for Christ. There is no doubt that Zagreus appeared as the only heathen god able to rival Christ. That is the reason why Celsus in his apology for the heathen emphasized the Orphic myths and beliefs in order to bridge the gap between pagans and Christians.[23] In a word, there is definitely a mythological agreement between the Orphic Dionysus and the Pauline Christ.

Now let us try to approach the mystical side of the problem. The Orphic communion with God includes the following elements: 1. The human soul suffers from the sin inherited from the Titans, which dwells in the

body. 2. It delivers itself from the original sin by getting rid of the bodily prison and attaining divine life. 3. This new birth is achieved by means of communion with Dionysus, that is, by dying with him and coming back to life with him. This process is considered a real happening. Ecstasy, by which the soul gets rid of the bodily bonds, is a real egress from the body. The communion with Zagreus becomes a real event in human life; mystic death and resurrection are considered as real as actual death. At the bottom of the whole process lies the belief that the death and resurrection of Dionysus were historical facts; to speak properly, that Dionysus himself was an historical person. This is a point of primary importance for everyone who wishes to understand the origin of the Orphic communion. And there is no reason for doubting that the Greeks never considered Dionysus' death as a myth. At Delphi the tomb was shown wherein his body was buried.[24] From a purely mythological point of view the believers in Dionysus can be aptly compared with Christian believers, who consider the death of Christ to be an historical event.

I do not think it necessary for our present purpose to emphasize the great difference which exists between a real person such as Jesus and a mythological person such as Zagreus; nor does it seem necessary to me to dwell on the great moral superiority of the heroic death of Jesus, when compared with the savage story of the death of Zagreus. All these considerations, which

are no doubt perfectly true, have nothing to do with our present problem.

Taking for granted that the history of Zagreus' death was for the Orphic as certain as Jesus' death for Christians, we must see the similarity between the Orphic and the Christian communion. Both assumed that man suffers from an original inherited sin; both asserted that the original sin can be blotted out by dying and being resurrected in communion with a divine being who dies and comes to life again. In both cases an historical event, which in the opinion of the believers really happened, becomes a spiritual event for every man at all times. Moreover the Orphic doctrine entails two degrees of deliverance from sin: the mystery and death.[25] The first one brings the soul out of the bodily prison by means of ecstasy during life;[26] the latter delivers the soul definitely and forever.[27] According to St. Paul, deliverance from the flesh can be attained during life by means of baptism and in the after-life by means of death.[28] The Orphic is born again through communion with Zagreus; the Christian is born again through communion with Christ. The Orphic becomes a *bakchos,* in other words, he attains the Dionysiac nature; the Christian attains the very essence of Christ. Through the mystery men turn from the Titanic to the Dionysiac nature; through baptism men turn from the physical to the spiritual. The Titanic inheritance is, like the Adamic sin, not the consequence of an individual fault but a permanent weakness in the body, connected

with the very nature of man. For Orphism, as for Paulinism, the aim of the spiritual experience is to deliver souls from the burden of the flesh and bring them into contact with God.

The background of this process was realism. The basic experience of Paulinism was the new birth through the death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, an historical fact, or, if you prefer, a story which Christians regard as an historical fact, I mean the death and the resurrection of Christ, became a mystical fact, the spiritual rebirth of man. The point of departure for this new birth which is the pivot of the whole Christian experience is the resurrection of Christ or, better, the historical evidence of the resurrection of Christ. The Christian rebirth of man rests on the historical certainty that the Savior was actually resurrected and on the possibility that, once having happened in the past, this historical fact can become a spiritual fact in man. Objectivity and realism are the cornerstones of every Christian rebirth. In the last analysis, the process is, aside from its spiritual or moral content, a substitution of personality. Men come in touch with an ancestor, a hero or another person and by assuming his personality go through the deeds and facts attributed by tradition to this new personality. The only basic condition of this process is historical certainty: if you think that Napoleon never existed, it will never be possible for you to assume his personality which has in your opinion no historical existence. Hence the necessity of realism.

Spiritualistic or philosophic allegories can not supply any effective basis for the Christian rebirth.

This process, by which the historical event of Christ's resurrection becomes the spiritual rebirth of men, is expounded by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. The logical process of St. Paul's thought, notwithstanding the obscurity arising from his language, consists of four factors: 1. Christ dies in order to free mankind from the Adamic sin.[29] 2. This deliverance is attained by dying and being born again with him.[30] 3. The body is the seat of sin.[31] 4. By being born again sin is destroyed in the body.[32] In other words, as I said above, the historical death and resurrection of Christ, having been real events, now become spiritual events in man. There is a passing from history to spirit, from past to present, from Christ to man. This process is expressed by Paul through two concepts: law and faith. Law means the historical fact that once Christ died in order to atone for man's sin. Faith points to the spiritual fact of the human rebirth. Law is useless without faith; faith is the means by which law becomes effective in human life.[33] In other words, salvation is achieved in two ways: first, by means of law which makes Christ a victim of Adamic sin, and afterward by means of faith, which delivers men from sin through communion with Christ.

In other words, we can distinguish in St. Paul's soteriology two different strands, symbolized by the words *law* and *faith*. The first strand undoubtedly had

a Hebrew origin. The notion of the expiation of sin by means of a designated victim sounds perfectly Jewish. But no one would assume a Hebrew origin for the notion of communion with Christ, for this concept was perfectly alien to the Jewish spirit. For Jews there was an impassable gulf between man and God; absolute transcendentalism lies at the root of Jewish religious thought.

This mystic process, according to St. Paul's thinking, had a quite realistic content. The Pauline justification, notwithstanding its spiritual implication, was in the last analysis a realistic occurrence, an objective change based on the objective event of Christ's death.[34] Paul speaks of justification in realistic terms, which remind us of the Platonic notion of ecstasy. Communion with the death and resurrection of Christ is for him not an allegory of a spiritual change, but an objective truth, a real death and resurrection.[35] "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that

our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

His notion of sin also shows a striking realism, because he conceived sin not as a mere spiritual weakness but in connection with the flesh. This deliverance is conceived as a real change, consisting in the fact that souls, freed from the earthly body, symbolized by the first Adam, clothe themselves with the spiritual body, symbolized by the second Adam, Christ. Hence the idea of baptism as a death which delivers souls from the flesh.[36] This consistent realism sounds perfectly Greek: it brings us back to Aristotle, who conceived emotions as *metabolai,* that is, as changes; to Plato, who considered ecstasy as a material egress of soul from body; and to the whole Greek mentality which did not distinguish material from spiritual phenomena, regarding visions as journeys and blotting out sins by means of purifications.

This realism which connects a particular spiritual state with a particular material action and refuses to admit that it may be possible to attain spiritual gifts apart from material means, is the origin of the sacrament. A sacrament arises from the habit of considering spirit and matter in so close a mutual connection as to mistake material events for spiritual events. No one is ignorant of the fact that St. Paul's doctrine rested on strictly dualistic notions: no one so emphasized the contrast between soul and body and carried to so logical an issue these dualistic premises. But you must take into

consideration the fact that St. Paul's dualism is something quite different from what modern thought terms dualism. For us, dualism is not to be taken to mean that soul and body are two different opposite things, two different objects, but two different and opposite aspects of a self whose oneness arises from the mutual interaction of these elements and whose life is the outcome of this interaction. St. Paul represents a quite different line of thought; his thinking was deeply rooted in the Greek tradition. He thought of soul and body as of two different things. Like the Orphic, he conceived the soul to be imprisoned in the body, and, in the last analysis, he imagined salvation as a movement, a change, an Aristotelian *metabole*. Hence Pauline sacramentarian realism. St. Paul regards the Eucharist as a material action which constitutes the way to communion with Christ. No doubt it has a deep spiritual content which cannot be attained without faith, but the material action is, nevertheless, professedly necessary to attain the spiritual goal.[37]

I think the strict resemblance between this theory of the sacrament and the Greek theory of the mystery must be obvious. For the Greeks also there were sacred acts which constituted the only approach to God. Neither the Greeks nor Paul ever admitted that communion with God might be reached without sacraments. Baptism and the Eucharist are, in the light of history, nothing but acts of initiation. They constitute and mark a passing from one condition to another. That does not mean

that either the Greeks or Paul had a low idea of sacraments. The Greeks certainly attached a great moral importance to the mysteries and considered them the very source of spiritual blessedness. I need not dwell on the spiritual content of St. Paul's creed. Nevertheless the starting point is realism.

From this realistic idea of the sacrament, that is, from the idea that it puts a particular seal upon men, a differential mark of grace, is derived the notion of a religious society formed by all who partake of the sacrament. The notion that initiates form a particular society quite different from the whole of mankind is quite a primitive idea, from which secret primitive societies arose. The Greeks had the same idea; mysteries, as the Hymn to Demeter indicates, paved the way to the formation of a society endowed with particular privileges. Orphism considered its adherents to be possessed of particular rights and gifts. Paul's notion of the sacraments agrees perfectly with these Greek notions. His realism led him to consider sacraments as the foundation of a particular society quite different from ordinary society. Hence the notion of the church, not only as a group of men who share in the same creed, but as a real society which feels entitled to consider itself more or less separate from the general community of men. Hence the conflicts between church and state.

In the light of realism we can easily understand how it happened that the original Gospel account of a Jewish Passover was transformed by the addition of some

verses into the description of a sacramental act.[88] In my opinion, the synoptic story of the Lord's Supper consisted only in the account of a sorrowful episode of Jesus' life; that is, he celebrated with his disciples his last Passover, being perfectly aware that he would have no other opportunity in his life to celebrate it. "When the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said: Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said: He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said: Master, is it I? He said unto him: Thou hast said. But I say to you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." This is, with some little differences, the account of the synoptic Gospels, a sorrowful account of a rabbi who celebrated the Passover with his disciples, feeling that it was the last. This account, full of a sublime sadness, had no sacramental content at all. But by means of the addition of some verses the Jewish Passover was transformed into a sacrament. According to these verses, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said: Take, eat: this is my body. And he

Wall paintings from the hypogæum of Vibia, fourth century A.D., showing a mixture of pagan and Christian elements with evident Orphic influences. In the upper painting, Vibia is led by Mercury into the presence of the infernal gods and of the three Moirai (Fates). In the lower painting, Vibia is taken by a good angel to paradise where the blessed are feasting.

Two Christian wall paintings from the catacombs, showing the banquets of the blessed. Striking illustrations of the endurance of Orphic ideas concerning the after-life in early Christianity.

took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." By the addition of these verses the Jewish meal, which was a commemoration of a national Jewish event, became a sacramental meal, the Lord's Supper, which sounds perfectly Greek and is in line with the sacred meals of the gods, in which men share. I refer, for instance, to a well-known invitation to the meal of Sarapis, contained in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus of the second century B.C.[39]

This transformation must be connected with Pauline theories; the best evidence of its Pauline origin is the identity between the interpolated verses and the account of St. Paul himself in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 11. "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In short, I am quite confident that Pauline theology had an Orphic origin.

We must now carry the facts, related above, to their logical conclusion. They throw light on some striking features of St. Paul's missionary activity: first of all,

his failure with Jews and his success with Greeks, although he declared himself a loyal Jew and announced what ought not to sound so very strange to Hebrew ears, the advent of the Messiah. As is well known, St. Paul started with the Jews, according to the injunction of Jesus, to preach first to the sheep of Israel. But all his endeavors ended in failure. Then he turned to the Greeks and at once achieved an extraordinary success. At Antioch the Jews injured him, but the pagans were pleased when he turned to them. At Iconium Paul and Barnabas preached at the same time to Greeks and Jews, but the Jews did their utmost to keep the Jews away. At Lystra he achieved a great success. At Ephesus he preached for three months in the synagogue without any results until he turned to the Greeks and found many followers.[40]

No doubt the apostle did his best to convert the Jews, without shrinking before obstacles or dangers. Why did he not succeed among them? And how are we to explain his success among the Greeks? We are compelled to admit that in his preaching there was something which on the one hand offended Jewish ideas, and on the other, conformed to Greek ideas. What other explanation is there? I think that the point which both offended the Jews and pleased the Greeks was the notion of communion with God. As was said above, this notion was perfectly alien to Jewish minds, which had always a particular tendency strictly to distinguish man from God. Quite to the contrary, the Greeks consid-

ered communion with God a normal happening. The whole Greek religious consciousness led them to admit the possibility of man's coming into contact with God and assuming his nature. The Greek religion never drew a fixed line of demarcation between man and God. On the one hand, the gods were conceived as improved and magnified human beings endowed with human needs and qualities; on the other hand, the gods were permanently linked to men. Gods and men were somehow interrelated: they had love and hatred, interests and wars, in common. From men and gods children could be born that were heroes or intermediate beings between men and gods. I hope I shall not be misunderstood if I say that Christ must have appeared to the Greeks as a hero. Christianity is, from a merely historical viewpoint, an enormous Greek hero cult devoted to a Jewish Messiah.

Now, how are we to explain this deep Orphic element in Paulinism? Are we entitled to surmise that Paul had a personal acquaintance with the mysteries? In other words, may we suppose that he had been initiated? Strange as this idea may appear at first sight, there is no reason for rejecting it. We must consider the mysteries from the Greek, especially from the Hellenistic, point of view. Nothing was more usual and honorable for a man of the cultured class in Hellenistic times than to become acquainted with the mysteries. In the Hellenistic age, religion as well as literature showed the deep influence of the mysteries. Nothing is more

reasonable than to think that a cultured man, like Paul, born in a great center of culture, gifted with a peculiar intellectual grasp and a vivid curiosity about religious experiences, should feel attracted to Orphism. No doubt Paul claimed and declared himself to be a loyal Pharisaic Jew. But we must take the word "Jew" in the meaning, not of classic Judaism, but of Hellenistic Judaism: in the meaning which the term "Jew" had for Jews thoroughly affected by Hellenic thought. Philo himself claimed to be a loyal Jew, but his whole thought was thoroughly imbued with Platonism, without his being aware that Platonism could never harmonize with Judaism. Clement of Alexandria found no contradiction between his faith and the mysteries which were quite familiar to him, even to their least ritual detail.[41] The same thing we may assume for Paul, without being afraid of violating historical truth.

## CHAPTER X

## PAST AND FUTURE

This book has centered about two ideas: the primitiveness and the distinctiveness of Orphism. The proof of the first idea was the chief task of the first five chapters; my primary aim was to exhibit the principal features of Orphism, especially the collective ecstasy, the collective communion, the spiritual rebirth and their origin in primitive mentality. The remaining chapters have been devoted especially to the distinctiveness of Orphism. I have tried to make explicit its ecstatic and eschatological nature, arising in the early Mycenæan age through a *Nebi,* or prophet, born in Thrace and named Orpheus by later tradition. I have followed this cult during its first struggles against the Greek state religion, before it gained entrance into Greek society; then its further career, its endeavors to gain control of Greek culture, and the means by which it succeeded. Then came the second period, marking the great philosophical conquests of Orphism, its contributions to the Pythagorean, Heraclitean and Platonic philosophies. And finally, the third and last period, the part played by Orphism in the making of Paulinism.

Let us now come to a conclusion and draw our little moral. The most prominent characteristic of Orphism

is, to repeat, its indifference to the state religion. It accepted neither the state gods nor their myths, though it had neither a rich pantheon nor a rich mythology of its own. Another characteristic which differentiates it from the Greek religion is its remarkable conservatism. Compared with the unremitting changes of Greek mythology, incapable of keeping to any definite myth and professedly eager for new tales and new gods, Orphic immobility appears one of the most astonishing features of ancient history, comparable only with the miraculous tenacity of the Egyptian religion. The myth of Zagreus as expounded by Neoplatonists of the fifth century is the same which Thracian tribes of the bronze age had conceived. The golden leaflets of Thurii, buried as late as the third century B.C., contain doctrines professed two centuries earlier by Pythagoreans. The funeral rite of the *timponi* of Thurii agrees perfectly with the accounts of Plutarch, who lived in the latter half of the first century A.D. Most probably the Orphic books studied by Julian,[1] and still extant in the time of Proclus,[2] had the same content as the Orphic texts of the fifth century B.C. The Orphic-Eleusinian mysteries were performed without interruption from at least the eighth century B.C. down to 396 A.D., when the sanctuary of Eleusis was destroyed by the monks in the train of Alaric; in other words, for at least eleven centuries, perfectly indifferent to historical catastrophes and upheavals. If you take into consideration what an enormous change came over the Greek religious conscious-

ness during even the short period from Æschylus to Euripides, or, if you wish, from Phidias to Praxiteles; moreover, if you recall what an influence the Greek poets exerted on the evolution of Greek mythology, you will admit that the Orphic conservatism can be explained only on the hypothesis that Orphism was an outsider in Greek religion and developed according to its foreign essence. Hence I conclude that, far from being a constructive element in the history of Greek religion, Orphism appears to have been thoroughly alien to it and somehow an unconscious foe of Greek religion.

Now I wish to emphasize the part played by doctrinal religions in the history of philosophy. These religions always tend in a peculiar philosophical direction, owing to the importance attributed to dogmas and creeds, which, apart from any consideration of their content, make for clear and precise thinking. However severe our judgment of theology may be from a religious standpoint, we can not doubt the importance of theology in the making of philosophy by paving the way for conceptual thought. History proves that philosophy arose from doctrinal religions: Jewish philosophy from Jewish religion, Buddhist philosophy from Buddhism, Islamic philosophy from Islam.

Greek history furnishes a clear illustration of this law. Greek philosophy did not arise from the Greek state religion, which was a spontaneous religion, but, on the contrary, pre-Socratic speculation arose either from a materialistic notion of the world which com-

pletely ignored the state religion or from a professed enmity against the state religion. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Diogenes of Apollonia, Anaxagoras and Xenophanes tend toward a materialistic explanation of the world which dispenses entirely with religion. Empedocles attributes to a divine energy a part in the making of the world, but is far from borrowing these energies from the state religion; instead of turning to Kronos or to Zeus, as the old theogonies do, he invents a myth of his own, the struggle between *Neikos* and *Philia,* discord and love, in order to explain the origin of the world. There is something very impressive in this struggle for freeing the human spirit from the bonds of traditional religion. The philosophers prior to Socrates give the first example of a philosophy whose starting point is not religion, but, on the contrary, deliverance from religion. In order to understand the meaning of this struggle, we must remember that history witnessed a similar struggle in the eighteenth century, namely, the French philosophers of the *Encyclopédie,* such as Pietro Gassendi and Baron d'Holbach.

The philosophy of the Sophists appears to have been another speculative endeavor which broke with all previous ideas. It is customary for the general public to misunderstand the real significance of the Sophists and to overrate some of the shadowy sides of their teaching, but the philosophical results of the Sophistic philosophy were enormous. It brought philosophy from

nature to man, from the outer world to the inner one; it emphasized the greater value of the individual mind and paved the way for the Socratic philosophy. Of course, nothing was better adapted than this audacious philosophy, with its emphasis on the value of the self as a standard of judgment, to criticize the anthropomorphic state religion.

Plato belonged to the same line of thought; he was an outstanding adversary of Homeric anthropomorphism. Aristotle marks the climax of this unremitting process whose aim was the deliverance of Greek thought from the Greek state religion. His notion of God as a spiritual power directing the whole world by his energy can certainly not be harmonized with the traditional anthropomorphic notions of God which formed the background of the Greek religion.

Parallel with this progressive conquest of pure philosophic thought free from all religious bondage runs the criticism of the Olympian gods. Heraclitus condemns Homer;[3] Xenophanes criticizes the Homeric notion of the gods and explains the origin of the Homeric myths on purely anthropological grounds;[4] Theagenes breaks down the Homeric myths by assuming them to be allegories;[5] Protagoras is thoroughly sceptic and agnostic;[6] Prodicus explains the origin of religion as resting on human needs;[7] Critias attributes to religion a political origin;[8] Plato condemns the Homeric myths on the charge of immorality and leaves no room in his

philosophy for personal gods;[9] Aristotle attributes to natural forces all the benefits which in former times had been considered divine gifts.[10]

In fact the whole history of Greek philosophy from its very beginning down to Aristotle, who marks the summit of the Greek speculative process, affords proof that no link ever existed between Greek religion and Greek philosophy. But on the other hand, along with this unremitting struggle against the state religion goes the increasing influence of Orphism, first on Pythagoras and Heraclitus and afterwards on Plato. At first sight, it seems that Aristotle was victorious in his reaction against Platonic mysticism. But if we look at the Platonic philosophy from the viewpoint of world history, and especially the profound influence which it exerted on Christian thought, we must conclude that it is not easy to overrate the real importance of Orphism for the evolution of human thought.

This gradual victory of Orphism was favored by the decay of the state religion, which accompanied the development of Orphism, and insured the final triumph of mysticism. Thus the history of the Greek state religion from the fifth century onward appears to be a slow, unconscious dissolution, the explanation of which undoubtedly lies in the complete absence of any fixed creeds and the consequent impossibility of establishing any tradition whatsoever. Greek religious conservatism relates, outside of Orphism, to rites, not to creeds; the Greeks felt obliged to keep faithful to ritual traditions,

but they never felt a spiritual need for fixed, definite ideas about the gods. Their myths had no religious authority, and every Greek felt entitled to criticize them. Aristophanes, who was quite conservative, did not shrink from making fun of Dionysus on the stage. The absence of any intellectual basis brought Greek religion to the gradual, unconscious decay which constitutes, properly speaking, its very history.

The best evidences of this decay are poetry and sculpture. If you compare the religious feelings expressed by Æschylus with the consistent scepticism of Euripides, who seems to find a particular joy in exerting his pitiless criticism at the expense of the poor Olympian gods, you get the impression that a great spiritual upheaval had taken place in the meantime. The mythical schemes of the tragedies are the same: very often the titles even of the Euripidean tragedies conform with the titles of Æschylus. The great source of the subject matter of tragedies is, as before, the Homeric poems; but the spirit has undergone a deep transformation, consisting in the fact that Æschylus considered myths as religious truths, and Euripides found nothing more in mythology than an inexhaustible source of subjects for his tragedies. Hellenistic poetry conveys the same impression. Callimachus, for instance, imitates the Homeric hymns, but no one endowed with the smallest degree of spiritual insight can fail to have the impression that the hymns of Callimachus are nothing but rhetorical pieces and that the

Homeric hymns are, conversely, the outcome of deep faith. The same impression is conveyed in the period which extended from Phidias to Lysippus. No doubt Phidias ought to be considered the highest artistic expression of the fifth century, a thoroughly religious age. We are sufficiently acquainted with the masterpieces of this great artist to be certain that a profound religious consciousness inspired his art, the religious consciousness of Æschylus and of all Greece, believing it owed the defeat of the Persians to the gods. But no more than thirty years later, Greek art shows no religious stamp at all. Praxiteles, the friend of Protagoras, considered Greek gods beautiful models for his art. His tendency was to work into the Greek gods as much beauty as possible, without taking into consideration their consequent loss of divine content and their purely human character. Lysippus marks the climax of this humanizing process. He aimed consciously at realism, and was not worried in the least about the religious results of his realistic trend. He applied human shapes to gods; gods became human beings. The enormous gap which had divided men from gods in the Homeric age was bridged forever. Greeks conceived the divine world as a complex of beings to whom, however beautiful they might be, no one ever had recourse.

But I need not dwell longer on this theme. The main fact, which poetry as well as art undoubtedly illustrates, is that the philosophical enmity against the state religion is to be considered not as the isolated trend of

some philosophers, but as the philosophical expression of the religious thought of the great majority. Greek criticism destroyed Greek religion. But along with this dissolution came the gradual victory of Orphism described above. This result is a double concomitant process which is characterized by an inner logical harmony; on the one hand, a decay of state religion; on the other, the progress of Orphism. The great constructive powers of Greek culture, estheticism and mysticism, or, if you like, intellectualism and intuitionism, necessarily took opposite lines of development. Around this vast double process centered the whole history of Greek thought. From the seventh century B.C. down to the Neoplatonists, a period of more than ten centuries, we can follow the progressive decay of Homeric intellectualism and the progressive triumph of Orphic mysticism. According to appearances, and especially for anyone who considers the external features of art and poetry, the Olympian religion never lost its dominant position, and died only under the victorious assaults of Christianity. But on closer analysis, Greek religion appears to have been an empty phantom by the time of its struggle with Christianity, barely maintaining the appearances of a living body. The Greeks themselves had been working toward Christianity for many centuries. Christianity, apart from the person of Jesus, appears as the inevitable issue of the long process we have depicted. The Jewish revival, centering around the Messianic person of Jesus, can not be considered the real Christianity. What people

call Christianity, and what Christianity turns out really to be, is the product of Greek thought, is the result of Greek belief in Jesus.

By this statement I do not mean to over-emphasize the work and person of the apostle Paul. On the contrary, I think that in the light of history Paul appears to have been not so much a theologian and reformer, as the embodiment of a collective religious movement. Paul symbolizes the conjunction of Jewish faith and Greek thought. Orphism supplied him the theological tools which he needed to clothe the faith in Jesus in the garb of Greek conceptions. I do not wish to minimize either the Jewish or the Greek side of Paul; his work is the result of a harmonious blending of these unwitting allies, which though decidedly alien to each other were compelled by history to cooperate for its own mysterious ends. Had Paul not been a Jew he would never have given concreteness to the Adamic inheritance nor attached great importance to the Dionysiac deliverance from sin. Without Judaism, Orphism would have had no meaning to him; but as it was, Orphism showed him a real path of salvation from that burden of original sin which the Jews felt most keenly. Orphism thus supplied him something which Judaism never was capable of furnishing: a way of salvation by which an historical event, Jesus' death, becomes a redeeming event in the life of an individual. Judaism led him to conceive Jesus as an expiatory victim for human sins but never to the idea of a continued expiation by oneness

with Christ, by dying and being resurrected with him. Orphism and Judaism completed and explained each other, and the product was Christianity.

It is not easy for us to explain how it happened that these two opposite currents finally became identified, unless we see the facts from the Greek point of view. Hellenism had always been endowed with an extraordinary unifying power. What to us appears contradictory and opposite found reconciliation and harmony in Greek thought. Hence the tendency to consider evolution and history as the result of the harmonizing activity of opposite forces. Empedocles assumes that the world arose from the contrasting forces of *Neikos* and *Philia,* discord and love. Heraclitus bases his whole philosophy on the notion of the unity of opposites. The contradiction between man and God found its resolution in the concept of the hero. The antithesis so essential for Jews between man and God, life and death, good and evil, was conceived by the Greeks as a temporary and apparent contrast within an ultimate harmony. Hence the tendency toward syncretism, which brought into contact and identified gods coming from many countries and diverse quarters, implying opposed lines of thought, symbolizing contradictory beliefs. In the light of these tendencies, Orphism and Judaism became a ready prey to the unifying mentality of Hellenistic Greeks. The mutual completion of Orphism and Judaism appeared to them not as absurd, but as the logical and natural outcome of Hellenistic thought.

What, then, was the part played by Orphism in history? I believe it might be defined as the mediator between the Jewish revival of Jesus and the Greek world. The teaching of Jesus could never have surmounted its Jewish *milieu* and become diffused in the world without undergoing the profound remodelling necessary to make it intelligible and acceptable to the Greeks. The whole subsequent history of Christianity depended on this issue. The possibility of further development lay in the fact that the teaching of Jesus had a universal content along with its local meaning. But the historical realization of this universal content depended upon the adaptations which it might be possible to effect without destroying its essence. How far was the new faith able to remain what it was and yet become Greek? What new form would it adopt?

The problem was a very serious one, as it is for any religion that passes from its birthplace to other countries and cultures. It is the problem that confronts the Christian missionary wherever he endeavors to carry his gospel to people whose intellect permits them to accept his message only through transformations which often constitute a genuine syncretism. The problem of mediating Christianity for the Greeks could not be solved by recourse to the Greek state religion, because nothing was more decidedly opposed to the spirit of Christianity than the Greek religion. After the fourth century B.C., on account of its scepticism and ritualism, it had lost all religious content. The state religion was espe-

cially incapable of understanding the experience of unity with God, for in it, as illustrated by the Homeric poems and the tragedies, the divine and the human spheres were thought to be distinct and separate. Man felt God to be far away in a different world. The possibility of communion and identification with God was out of the question.

But mysticism among the Greeks had grown alongside the state religion, and, due to its influence, the whole of Greece became in Jesus' age, consciously or unconsciously, impregnated with Orphic ideas. Now these ideas centered precisely in the notion of communion and union with God. Thus, thanks to Orphism, the Greeks were able to accept the notion which constituted the very heart of Christianity.

In still another particular, Orphism was suited to become the interpreter of the new faith. It could effectively interpret the person of Jesus. In Jewish Christianity, properly speaking, it would have been impossible even to employ the word "Christianity," since in reality it had no Christ. The person of the Master had a purely human content; he was the Messiah, indeed, but this term was understood in a Jewish, human way. To be sure, the disciples believed in Jesus as a being endowed with divine powers, but in a vague way. He was a mortal who attained divinity by his spiritual exaltation. But Judaism lacked the adequate theological concept which could express this feeling; it lacked the concept of the God-man, in which man and God converge in a

single being. On the other hand, the Greeks had long ago realized this concept in the figure of the hero. And Orphism possessed an entire theology in which everything the disciples of Jesus believed with reference to his person found adequate expression. Thus the Greek myth served as the medium for the interpretation of all that was mysterious and inexpressible in the person of the Master.

Are we to think that the person of the Master suffered degradation when reshaped into a myth? This would mean a refusal to recognize the value and functions of myth. In a certain sense, of course, any inner experience whatsoever loses something by being molded into imaginative form; but there is no denying that only by means of myth does our experience become concrete and communicable. Similarly, any artistic intuition necessarily loses something when the painter expresses it in a picture or the poet embodies it in a poem; but by means of the picture or of the poem it can be passed on to others. Every idea thus loses something of its force on being expressed in language; but it is none the less true that without language none of our ideas could be perpetuated.

Myth, therefore, is necessary for religious history. The myth can and ought to be reduced to the simplest possible form; but it cannot be dispensed with, since the divine, the mysterious, the ineffable cannot be expressed except by imagination, that is, by myth. If it could be adequately expressed rationally it would no longer be

ineffable. Therefore the divine element perceived by the disciples in the person of Jesus, their feeling of his intimacy with God, could never have been transmitted to the world had it not taken on mythical form. And it was this form that the Greek mentality was able to provide. The new religion, in passing from Judaism to Hellenism, was under the same necessity that devolves upon every religion in making the transition from its own civilization to another. It must accept symbols and terms that are not its own. Everyone knows, for instance, what profound changes Christianity undergoes when it is transmitted to Africans or Hindus. It becomes a new species of Christianity, no longer European but Africo-European, or Indo-European. Nevertheless we do not believe that in this process Christianity is degraded; we welcome these transformations because they permit the African to become Christian. Orphism, by reclothing the Savior's personality with its myth, interpreted and defined him and his relation to mankind, making it real and intelligible. Without this mythical interpretation he would have remained restricted to so-called Jewish Christianity.

On the other hand, it is obvious that it is not the external form but the essential content to which value is attached. It is not the material of the picture, but the idea it embodies that gives it value. It is not the mechanical fact of language that has significance but the idea expressed therein. Hence it is not the myth which is of consequence but the idea it serves to express.

Above all we must remember the new content that Christianity introduced into the Orphic form. There is no doubt that the essential character of the Orphic Zagreus is totally different from that of the Pauline Christ, since there was nothing behind the Orphic myth, while behind the Christian myth there was Jesus. For an Orphic who lost faith in the Orphic myth, nothing was left; but to a Christian who loses faith in the Pauline myth, there remains the person of Jesus, the prophet, the master, the friend. Zagreus had never become a master of life for his believers. Indeed, abandoning this strictly mythological viewpoint, it would really be a waste of time to prove the enormous superiority of Christianity when compared with the magic rites of Orphism, its barbaric myth, primitive initiations and materialistic eschatology.

From the Greek point of view, the Jewish revival of Jesus furnished to Greek mysticism the opportunity and the means for fighting successfully its old adversary. Christianity is the final defeat of the Greek Olympian gods. The Fathers of the Church had a deep sense of what the victory of Christianity over the Olympian gods meant and also of what a contribution Greek mysticism had brought to this victory, and they always remained unrelenting foes of the Greek state religion without concealing their sympathy for Greek mysticism. Their criticism of Greek mythology did not minimize at all their deep sympathy for Heraclitus and Plato, whom

they considered with some degree of truth as forerunners of Christianity.

This should not be taken to mean that the Christian victory was a complete one. Greek gods disappeared from the religious world but the Greek mentality still remained. Above all, its realism. This realism entered Christianity and gave to it its characteristic dogmatism. Ideas may be discussed as long as they are conceived as activities of the spirit; but when they are conceived as beings, they become really certain. I may dispute or doubt an idea, but I cannot dispute or doubt a tree. Plato, in fact, never entertained any doubt as to the ideas, and never attempted a proof of them.

From realistic reflection on faith issued theology, in other words, as the name itself indicates, the science of divine things. But science being certain, theology was led to conceive its own affirmations as objectively true, its dogmas and myths as concrete realities. Just as Plato considered myths to be facts, and had recourse to them to confirm the truth of his ideas, so Christianity considered its myths as real facts and saw in them not so much the expression as the confirmation of faith. With Augustine the Platonic world of ideas became identical with the realm of God, and the divine world of Christianity became as truly concrete as Plato's world of ideas. There was a passage from the spirit to nature. A true and special science of divine things was formed, just as there was a science of

earthly things. A geography of the celestial world was actually constructed correspondent to and as certain as that of the terrestrial world. It is the Platonic point of view again: two worlds, the human and the divine, not only equally true but also equally recognizable. The theologian knows the divine world with the same certainty as the human world. He knows that God is triune just as he knows that the sides of a triangle are three. We must not confound this realistic certainty with the certainty of faith. Faith is certain of the real existence of God, but it is not certain of its own representation and its definition of God; nay, the stronger the faith, the better it knows that it is impossible to condense religious experience into a formula. The certainty of faith is not a formal but a spiritual certainty. Theological certainty is formal; it has nothing to do with God, but with formulæ and dogmas concerning God. Thus was formed a divine science, which in so far as it is science has the right to confront human science with equal prerogatives. Theology and geology had equal rights; the story of the creation of the world was considered both as divine and as natural history. This pseudo-scientific realism is Greek, and these pretensions of theology are not derived from Jesus' teachings. Theology has a pagan origin and it makes Christianity pagan.

The only way to deliver Christianity from this imposition is to transform theology into mythology, that is, to cease to consider it from a religious viewpoint

as a sort of knowledge and to view it in the light of the history of religion as a complex of symbols by means of which man realizes his faith. There is really no essential difference between theology and mythology; their content is the same. They differ in that theology involves faith and implies truth, whereas mythology makes neither religious nor philosophical presumptions. The sacred myth assumes a theological character for everyone who believes it, and appears as a mythological product for everyone who sees it with the eyes of criticism or of science. Conversion involves a passing from mythology to theology. Neophytes and new converts regard as theology all that they once thought of as myth. A pagan employs the theological viewpoint towards the same stories of Zeus or Hera which he will condemn as myths after having been converted, and in this case he will view the same stories of Christ with theological eyes which once appeared to him as mere myths. For Origen the whole Orphic theology was nothing more than mythology; conversely, for Celsus the whole Christian theology was mythology. The reduction, then, of all theology to mythology is tantamount to delivering one's self from all religious presumption, and to inquiring into the origin and history of theology in the light of philology.

From this reduction of theology to mythology arises what seems to some a great danger, to others a great hope, the hope in a possible reintegration of Christianity. The history of Christianity has been a long

process of disintegration. From the apostolical age down, it has shown a dispersive tendency, a tendency to divide and dissolve into churches, sects and heresies. This centrifugal tendency is remarkable in a religion which had its center in a person and ought therefore to present the greatest unity. But the centralizing force of the gospel of Jesus had to meet another force, Greek realism, with its demand for religious knowledge. What man believes must be true; the forms in which he clothes his experiences must constitute knowledge. Hence the necessity not only of differentiating creed from creed, but of opposing one creed to another, as knowledge to ignorance. For in matters of knowledge, one can not be tolerant. If my piece of knowledge is true, another assertion contradicting mine can not also be true. A body can not be at the same time white and black, or heavy and light, but must be either one or the other. When experience is reduced to knowledge, or better, spirit to nature, and the believer is convinced that he possesses the only true knowledge of God, as a scientist is convinced that he has the only true knowledge of nature, the way is opened to intolerance. The whole sad history of Christian disintegration takes its rise from the theory of the cognitive function of theology.

But with the reduction of theology to mythology, the reintegration of Christianity becomes possible. The dogma-concept may be replaced by the dogma-symbol which permits harmony in difference. Hence the great

importance of every inquiry into the mythological origins of theology, and, in the interests of Christian unity, I should be pleased if I could think that this inquiry has made a small contribution to the solution of this problem.

# NOTES

## CHAPTER I

[1] The first document about the Eleusinian mysteries is the pseudo-Homeric hymn to Demeter, the contents of which go back to the eighth century B.C. The Eleusinian mysteries ended in 369 A.D. because the monks of Alaric destroyed the sanctuary (Eunapius: *Vita Maximi,* p. 53, Boissonade); but they were then very far from a natural death. In the age of Julian (331-363 A.D.) some Orphic books (Gregorius Nazianzenus: *Orationes,* V, 31) circulated, the contents of which were derived from the Orphic rhapsodies.

[2] Xenophon: *Cyropædia,* VIII, 7, 21: *ἐγγύτερον μὲν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων θανάτῳ οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ὕπνου.*

[3] On the atomistic doctrine, see Lucretius: *De rerum natura,* III, 425 *ff.*

[4] Clement of Alexandria: *Stromata,* IV, 22 (Stählin, II, 310).

[5] Dreams sent by Zeus, *Iliad,* II, 5. On the epistemological contents of dreams, Pindar: fragment 131, Schröder; Æschylus: *Eumenides,* 104; Plato: *Symposium,* 203 A; *Republic,* 571 C; *Timæus,* 71 D *ff.*

[6] For Aristotle every change is an *ecstasis: Physicæ auscultationis, Δ* 1616, pp. 222-316. Bekker: *μεταβολὴ δὲ πᾶσα φύσει ἐκστατικόν.* Compare Plutarch: *Quæstiones Conviviales* VIII, 9, 3 p. 723 C; *ἐκστάσεις αὗται καὶ μεταβολαὶ ποιοτήτων.* Suidas: *ἔκστασις θαυμαστός, ἢ ἀλλοίωσις;* Iamblichus: *De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum,* III, 7, p. 114, 9, Parthey; *ἔκστασις . . . ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ἀναγωγὴ καὶ μετάστασις.* During the ecstasis the soul leaves the body: Plato: *Ion,* 534 B; Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam,* II, p. 108, 23, Kroll; Philo: *Quis rerum divinarum hæres sit,* 14, Cohn-Wendland.

[7] Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam,* II, p. 354, 20, Kroll;

*In I Alcibiadem,* p. 175, Creuzer; p. 461, Cousin; Plato: *Phædo,* 67 C; = Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 13, p. 65, Pistelli; Olympiodorus: *In Alcibiadem,* p. 4, Creuzer.

[8] Plato: *Phædo,* p. 67 A; = Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 13, p. 65; Olympiodorus: *In Phædonem,* A VII, 2, Norvin.

[9] Plato: *Republic,* X, 614 *ff.*

[10] Plutarch: *De sera numinum vindicta, 22.*

[11] Proclus: *In Rempublicam,* II, p. 122, Kroll.

[12] See Rohde: *Der griechische Roman,* p. 260, 3; Ettig: *Acheruntica* (*Leipziger Studien* XIII, p. 251 *ff.*); Ganschinietz, in Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft,* X, 2, cols. 23-5 *ff.*

[13] *Iliad,* VIII, 367 *ff.*; IX, 457; XV, 188; XIX, 259 *ff.*; XX, 61-65; XXII, 482; XXIII, 100 *ff.*; *Odyssey,* XX, 81; XXIV, 106, 204; Hesiod: *Theogony,* 729 *ff.*; 814, 851; Plato: *Gorgias,* 523 B; 526 B; *Republic,* X, 614 C.

[14] Openings leading to Hades, Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie,* art., *Charonoia* (Waser); Daremberg-Saglio: *Dictionnaire des Antiquités,* art., *Inferi,* col. 503 (Durrbach); Preller-Robert: *Griechische Mythologie,* I, p. 817; Roscher: *Lexikon der Griechische Mythologie,* art., *Untenwelt,* col. 47 *ff.*

[15] Textual evidence in Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie,* IV, 2, col. 2002 (Robert).

[16] *Scholiast of Pindar,* VII, 95, Heyne.

[17] *Iliad,* VI, 418.

[18] About the washing and dressing of the *xoanon,* see Picard in Daremberg-Saglio: *Dictionnaire des Antiquités,* IV, 2, p. 1472. About the magic power of statues, Plutarch: *Aratus, 22*; Lucian: *De Syria dea,* 10, 36; Pausanias, IX, 24, 1 and 6. Compare Plato: *Laws,* XI, 931 A; Porphyry: *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων,* fragment 1, Bidez; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* III, 7, 1.

[19] The marriage took place in the Bukolion near the Prytaneion; Mommsen: *Feste der Stadt Athen,* pp. 393 *ff.*

[20] Mommsen: *l.c.,* pp. 436 *ff.*

[21] The Panathenaic procession consisted in offering a new mantle to the goddess.

[22] *Scholiast of Pindar,* VII, 95, Heyne; Lucian: *Philopseudes,* 19.

[23] Pausanias, VIII, 41, 4, p. 684.

[24] Pausanias, III, 15, 11, p. 246.

[25] Polemon in *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum,* III, 146.

[26] Pausanias, III, 16, 6, p. 249.

[27] Plutarch: *Aratus,* 32.

[28] Strabo, VI, 1, 14; Quintus Smyrnæus, XIII, 424. Other instances in Daremberg-Saglio: *Dictionnaire des Antiquités,* IV, 2 pp. 1471-72, art. *Statua* (Picard).

[29] Porphyry: *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων,* fragment 1, Bidez; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* III, 7, 1.

[30] Lucian: *De Syria dea,* 10.

[31] Lucian: *Philopseudes,* 18.

[32] Pausanias, VI, 11, 6, p. 478.

[33] Tzetzes: *Commentary on Lykophron's Alexandra,* 615.

[34] Pausanias, VII, 5, 7.

[35] *Historia Augusta* XXVII, 17, 5, Peter.

[36] Athenagoras: *Apologia,* 25.

[37] Pausanias, VII, 22, 4.

[38] Phoronis, fragment 4, Kinkel.

[39] Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon,* 4, 46; Arnobius: *Adversus nationes,* 6, 2.

[40] Other instances in Pfister: *Der Reliquienkultus im Altertum* (Giessen, 1889), pp. 362 *ff.*

[41] On Mycenæan anthropomorphism, see Nielsson: *The Minoan Mycenæan Religion* (London, 1927), Chap. XI.

[42] Textual evidence in Picard: *θεοὶ ἐπιφανεῖς,* in *Χενια.* (Athens, 1912), pp. 67-81; and in Pfister: art. *Epiphanie;* in Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie,* Supplement IV, col. 3103. Polyærus (*Strategemata* II, 31, 4; VIII, 59), Herodotus (I, 61) and Plutarch (*Themistocles* 15) relate some stratagems which would have been impossible without a general unshaken belief in the occasional epiphany of gods.

[43] See Forrer: *Vorhomerische Griechen in den Keilschrift-*

*Texten von Boghazköi,* Mitteilungen d. deutschen Orientgesellschaft, 1924.

[44] Compare Pfister, pp. 321 *ff.*, 331 *ff.*

[45] Ælianus: *Varia Historia,* III, 42.

[46] Diodorus: *Bibliotheca historica,* IV, 68, 4. *Cf.* Pausanias: *Descriptio Græciæ,* II, 18, 4; and Apollodorus: *Bibliotheca,* III, 36.

[47] Herodotus, II, 61.

## CHAPTER II

[1] Texts in Lobeck: *Aglaophamus,* pp. 357 *ff.*; and Preller-Robert: *Griechische Mythologie,* 4th ed., I, p. 706, note 2. The myth of the killing of Zagreus was the center of the Orphic mystery. Pausanias VIII, 37, 5; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 186; = Kinkel: *Epicorum græcorum Fragmenta,* 5: *Παρὰ δὲ Ὁμήρου Ὀνομάκριτος παραλαβὼν τῶν Τιτάνων τὸ ὄνομα Διονύσῳ τε συνέθηκεν ὄργια, καὶ εἶναι τοὺς Τιτᾶνας τῷ Διονύσῳ τῶν παθημάτων ἐποίησεν αὐτουργούς.* Diodorus, V, 75: *τούτον τὸν θεὸν γεγονέναι φασὶν ἐκ Διὸς καὶ Περσεφόνης ὃν Ὀρφεὺς κατὰ τὰς τελετὰς παρέδωκε διασπώμενον ὑπὸ τῶν Τιτάνων.*

[2] The myth of the swallowed god appears three times in the Orphic theogony: Kronos devours his children; Zeus swallows Metis or Phanes; the Titans devour Dionysus. *Cf.* similar primitive myths in Lang: *Myth, Ritual and Religion,* 2nd ed., I, p. 295.

[3] Flagellation was practised in the lesser (Orphic) mysteries of Agra. In Aristophanes' *Frogs* (v. 500) Heracles is called *Μελίτης μαστιγίας*, and the scholiast explains this word with the initiation of Heracles in the lesser mysteries (Scholiast Aristophanes *Frogs,* 501, Dübner). The word *μαστιγίας* points to some sort of flagellation. For flagellation in primitive tribes, see Cooper: *Flagellation and the Flagellants* (London), pp. 80-81; Webster: *Primitive Secret Societies,* pp. 35, 186, 187, 189; Allier: *La psychologie de la conversion chez les peuples non civilizés,* I, p. 310. Plastering was often practised in the mysteries: Demosthenes, XVII, 219; Suidas: *Ἀπομάττεσθαι*;

Bekker: *Anecdota,* I, 293, 18 *ff.* *Cf.* Plutarch: *De superstitione,* III, 5, p. 166, Bernardakis; and Prott-Ziehen: *Leges græcorum sacræ,* I, 15. Nonnus often describes this rite: *Dionysiaca,* XXVII, 28 *ff.*; XXVII, 205 *ff.*; XXXIV, 144 *ff.* For the Orphic mysteries there is the testimony of Harpocration: art. *Ἀπομάττων* (Köchly): *ἤλειφον τῷ πηλῷ καὶ πιτύρῳ τοὺς μυουμένους ἐκμιμούμενοι τὰ μυθολογούμενα παρ' ἐνίοις ὡς ἄρα οἱ Τιτᾶνες τὸν Διόνυσον ἐλυμήναντο γύψῳ, καταπλησάμενοι ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ γνώριμοι γενέσθαι.* Harpocration refers to the myth that the Titans plastered the face of Dionysus with clay and killed him when he was amazed by the reflection of his own face in a mirror which the Titans held before his eyes. Nonnus: *Dionysiaca,* VI, 169 *ff.*, Köchly. The text of Harpocration must have said *γνώριμος* (relating to Dionysus) instead of *γνώριμοι.* For plastering in primitive rites: Lang, *op. cit.,* pp. 270 *ff.*; Webster: *op. cit.,* pp. 44 n. 2, 69, 77 note, 80, 88. The rhombos was one of the sacred symbols of Orphic mysteries (Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon,* II, 17, 2, Stählin; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* II, 323-4, Dindorf; Abel: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 196; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 34; *cf.* Arnobius: *Adversus nationes,* V, 19; Abel, 196; = Kern, fr. 34). For the use of the rhombos in primitive rites: Lang: *op. cit.*; Webster, pp. 62, 63, 76, 77 note, 86, 88, 99, 100, etc. In the mysteries it was whirled around by means of a string (Scholiast of Clement of Alexandria, p. 6) as among primitive peoples.

[4] Ælianus, fragment 42, Kircher.

[5] Ælianus, fragment 10.

[6] The soul is, according to Homer, like smoke or a shadow. *Iliad,* XXIII, 100 *ff: ψυχὴ δὲ κατὰ χθονὸς ἠύτε καπνὸς ᾠχετο. Odyssey,* XI, 207: *τρὶς δέ μοι ἐκ χειρῶν ἴκελον σκιὴ καὶ ὀνείρῳ ἔπτατ'*; XI, 220: *ψυχὴ δ' ἤυτε ὄνειρος ἀποπταμένη πεπότηται.*

[7] Aristophanes: *Frogs,* 449 *ff.*

[8] Pindar, fragment 129-130, Schröder. *Cf. Olympiaca,* II, 66 *ff.*

[9] Plato: *Republic,* II, p. 363 C.

[10] Pseudo-Plato: *Axiochus,* 13.

[11] Vergil: *Æneid,* VI, 638 ff.

[12] Söderblom: *La vie future d'après le mazdéisme* (Annales du *Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'Études,* 17), pp. 185 *ff.*

[13] Söderblom, *l.c.*

[14] McCulloch, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Ethics,* IX, p. 822.

[15] Söderblom, pp. 185 *ff.*

[16] Mörner: *Tirana* (Jena, 1915), p. 30.

[17] Allier: *op. cit.,* I, p. 300.

[18] Kaibel: *Inscriptiones Græcæ Siciliæ et Italiæ,* 641, 1 and 2; Diels: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker,* 3rd ed., III, pp. 176-7; Comparetti: *Laminette orfiche* (Florence, 1910); Olivieri: *Lamellæ aureæ orphicæ* (Kleine Texte 133, Bonn, 1915); Kern, p. 104, n. 32.

[19] On the Orphic domination in southern Italy, having its center in Croton, and on its destruction, see Diodorus, XII, 9, 4; Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 81, 89. On the names of southern Italian Orphics, see Kern, pp. 52, 73 *ff.*

[20] The account of Odysseus, the so-called Descent to Hades, consists of two different accounts. The original account pertained only to a magic operation in order to get the dead out of Hades and to interrogate Teiresias. This account was remodelled by interpolating bits of a real Katabasis, that is, a real Descent into Hades, containing the description of the world of the dead. The first corresponds more or less to verses 51-234, 385-537, 627-635; the second to verses 235-327, 538-626.

[21] Plato: *Gorgias,* pp. 523 *ff. Phædo,* pp. 112 *ff.*

[22] I allude to the following vases: Apulian crater in Munich 849 (Reinach: *Répertoire des vases peints,* I, p. 258, 3); Apulian crater in Karlsruhe 388 (Reinach, I, p. 108); Apulian crater in Naples 3222 (Reinach, I, p. 167); Apulian fragment in the collection Fenicia in Ruvo (*Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* XVI, plate III); Apulian crater in Leningrad, Ermitage 425 (Reinach, I, p. 479); Etruscan stamnos in Vienna (Reinach, I, p. 343); Apulian crater in Naples, Santangelo 709 (Reinach, I, p. 453, 1); Apulian crater in the British

Museum F 270 (Reinach, I, p. 356, 1); Apulian crater in Naples, Santangelo 11 (Reinach, I, p. 401, 2); Apulian fragment in Karlsruhe 256 (Reinach I, p. 455, 2); Apulian crater of the Collection of Jatta in Ruvo 1094 (Reinach, I, 356, 4); Apulian crater in Leningrad, Ermitage 424 (Reinach, I, p. 355); Cumæan amphora in Berlin 3024 (Reinach, I, p. 330, 3); Campanian hydria in the British Museum, F 210 (Panofka: *Musèe Blacas,* I, IX); Apulian amphora in the British Museum F 270 (Reinach, I, p. 356, 2); Apulian amphora in the Collection Beugnot (Winkler: *Darstellungen der Unterwelt auf unteritalischen Vasen,* plate); vase in the former Hamilton Collection (Reinach, I, p. 327, 2).

[23] Demosthenes, XXV, 52; Plautus: *Captivi,* V, 4, 15 (998), Goetz-Schoell; Cicero: *Disputationes Tusculanæ,* I, 16; Lutatius Placidus: *Ad Statii Thebais,* IV, 516, Jahnke.

[24] Reinach, I, pp. 167, 250, 455.

[25] Erinyes clothed in skins as described in the Orphic hymn LXVIII, v. 7. The vase of Munich shows the Heraclides still bearing their wounds in accordance with the Orphic tradition (Homer: *Odyssey,* XI, 40; Vergil: *Æneid,* VI, 445-50). The crowned young man of the Munich vase points to the rite of giving the dead a crown (Scholiast of Aristophanes *Lysistrata,* 601), which was an Orphic rite; the law of the Athenian Jobacchoi (Maass: *Orpheus,* p. 301, 160) promises a crown to the dead Jobacchos. Plato (*Republic,* 363 B) describes the blessed crowned.

[26] Plato: *Republic,* X, 13-14.

[27] *De sera numinum vindicta, 22.*

[28] Olympiodorus: *In Platonis Phædonem* (III; = Kern, 123).

[29] Diodorus, I, 964-6. Kern, p. 29, fr. 96.

[30] *Odyssey,* XI, 40: *πολλοὶ δ' οὐτάμενοι χαλκήρεσιν ἐγχείῃσιν ἄνδρες ἀρηίφατοι βεβροτωμένα τεύχὲ ἔχοντες.* Vergil, *Æneid,* VI, 416: crudelis nati monstrantem vulnera. *Ibid.,* 494 *ff.*: lacerum crudeliter ora; ora manusque ambas populatague tempora raptio auribus, et truncas inhonesto volnere naris.

[31] Hauer: *Die Religionen, ihr Werden, ihr Sinn, ihre Wahrheit* (Berlin, 1923), I, pp. 296 *ff.*

[32] Fletcher: *The Hako Pawnee Ceremony,* Bureau of Ethnology Reports, 1900-01 (Washington, 1904), pp. 178 *ff.*

[33] Frazer: *The Belief in Immortality,* I, pp. 204-5.

[34] Thurnwald, in *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte,* VI, p. 185.

[35] On the ghost dance religion, see Mooney: *The Ghost Dance Religion,* in Bureau of Ethnology Reports, 1892-3, IV, 2 (Washington, 1896), pp. 663, *ff.*, 672 *ff.*, 701 *ff.*, 716 *ff.*, 755, 799 *ff.*

[36] Howitt: *On Australian Medicine Men,* in *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland,* XVI, 886, pp. 49-51.

[37] McCulloch, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* II, p. 649; Frazer: *The Belief in Immortality,* I, p. 355; Hauer: *Die Religionen,* I, pp. 395 *ff.*; Hagar, in Hastings, *op. cit.,* I, p. 435; Whitley, in Hastings, *op. cit.,* V, p. 320.

[38] Hoffmann, in Bureau of Ethnology Reports, XIV, 1892-3, I, p. 161.

[39] Apuleius: *Metamorphosis,* XI, 23.

[40] Dieterich: *Eine Mythrasliturgie* (Leipzig, 1910).

## CHAPTER III

[1] Migne: *Patrologia latina,* 21, pp. 40 *ff. Cf.* Wetter: *Altchristliche Liturgien* in *Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments,* Neue Folge 13 (Göttingen, 1922), I, p. 22.

[2] Pp. 23-27; Wetter, I, p. 100.

[3] Hecker: *Die grossen Volkskrankheiten des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1865), pp. 14 *ff.*

[4] A. Meyer: *Die Auferstehung Christi* (Tübingen, 1905), p. 248. On the Camisards, see Schott in Herzog-Hauck: *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie,* 3rd ed., III, pp. 693 *ff.*; and Scott, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* III, pp. 175 *ff.*

[5] Horst: *Zauberbibliothek* (Mainz, 1821), I, pp. 318 *ff.*

[6] Euripides: *Bacchants*, 689 *ff.*

[7] Dionysius of Halicarnassus: *De Demosthene*, 22, p. 1022, Kroll.

[8] Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam*, I, p. 110, Kroll; I, p. 37, Kroll.

[9] Proclus: *In Rempublicam*, I, p. 111, Kroll; = Kroll: *De oraculis chaldaicis* (Breslau, 1894), p. 57.

[10] Proclus: *op. cit.*, II, p. 167. Lucian (*Philopseudes* 14) ridicules these visions.

[11] Psellus: *De dæmonum operatione* (Migne: *Patrologia græca* 22), IV, p. 829 D; p. 879 A. *Cf.* Psellus: *Expositio oraculorum Chaldæorum* (Migne, 122), p. 1135 D.

[12] Iamblichus: *De mysteriis*, III, 14, p. 133, Parthey. Iamblichus (*op. cit.*, 14, p. 76) alludes also to statues which appear by themselves.

[13] Psellus: *De dæmonum operatione*, p. 872 A, Migne.

[14] Gregorius Nazianzenus: *Contra Julianum*, I, 56, p. 571, Migne.

[15] *Cf.* the descriptions of Richet: *Traité de metapsychique*, pp. 612, 681-2, 687; and Gale: *A Study in Spiritualistic Hallucinations*, in Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Researches, XV, p. 84.

[16] Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, pp. 304-7.

[17] Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam*, II, p. 108, Kroll.

[18] Dio Chrysostomus: In *I Cor.*, XXXVI, 6 (X, 340 E).

[19] Tertullian: *De Anima*, 9.

[20] *Cf.* the evidence given by Isabeau Charras before a committee of investigation, in Meyer: *Die Auferstehung Christi* (Tübingen, 1905), p. 248.

[21] For instance, Athenæus, II, 1304; Themistius: *Orationes*, XX, p. 288, Dindorf.

[22] See especially on this point, Noack: *Eleusis* (Berlin, 1927), pp. 227, 236, 238.

[23] Leroux: *Les origines de l'edifice hypostyle* (Bibliothèque de l'école française d'Athènes, *fasc.* 108, Paris, 1912), fig. 59; Leopold: *La basilique souterraine de Porta Maggiore*, in

*Mélanges d'archeologie,* XXXIX, 1921-2, p. 169. The Eleusinian Telesterion of Cape Kolias was πολύστυλον according to Hesychius (4800, 15 *ff.*: *Κωλιάς*), a term which might point to a similar construction. The hypogæum discovered in Rome near the Porta Maggiore, which was probably a Telesterion, contains six big pillars. Leopold: *op. cit.,* p. 166; Carcopino: *La basilique pythagoricienne de la Porta Maggiore* (Paris, 1927), p. 25 and plate.

[24] Farnell: *Cults of the Greek States,* III, p. 182.

[25] In some small cities it was customary to enact the Eleusinian mysteries in accordances with the performances of Eleusis; for instance, in Keleai and Megalopolis (Pausanias, II, 14). The mysteries of Zeus in Kreta were celebrated in a grotto wherein there was no possibility of mechanical scenery (*Scholiast* of Plato, p. 446, Bekker).

[26] *Cf.* Wilamowitz: *Die Bühne des Æschylus,* in *Hermes,* XXI, 1886, p. 597, pp. 604-5. Bethe: *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des griechischen Theaters* (Leipzig, 1896), p. 8; Haig-Pickard: *The Attic Theatre* (Oxford, 1907), p. 80. The theatre of Dionysus at Athens in the sixth and fifth centuries had no fixed scenery; the scenery was improvised. The σκηνή was invented by Æschylus (Dörpfeld-Reisch: *Das griechische Theater,* pp. 32-3).

[27] Bousquet: *Le Japon de nos jours* (Paris, 1877), I, p. 496.

[28] Gobineau: *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale* (Paris, 1865), chaps. XIII and XIV; Chodzho: *Théatre Persian* (Paris, 1878); Dozy: *Essai sur l'histoire de l'Islam* (Paris, 1879), pp. 457-467; Renan: *Les Téaziès de la Perse,* in *Nouvelles études d'histoire religieuse,* pp. 185-216; Montet: *La religion et le théatre en Perse,* in *Revue d'histoire des religion,* XIV, pp. 277-290. Especially Gobineau, p. 383. See also Pelly, in Ridgeway: *The Dramas and Dramatic Dances of the Non-European Races* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 83, and Cohen: *Histoire de la mise en scēne dans le théatre français* (Paris, 1906).

[29] Schroeder: *Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda* (Leipzig, 1908), p. 34.

[30] Du Meril: *Origines latines du théatre français* (*Theatri liturgici quæ supersunt monumenta*), Paris, 1849. Reprinted in *Collection de reproductions en facsimile et de reimpressions d'ouvrages rares du XX siècle,* Vol. III (Leipzig-Berlin, 1897), pp. 99, 119, 215 *ff.*, 237; Mone: *Schauspiele des Mittelalters,* 2nd ed. (Mannheim, 1852), I, p. 9.

[31] Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon,* II, 17, 2, Stählin; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* II, 323-4, Dindorf; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 34; Arnobius: *Adversus nationes,* V, 19; = Kern, fr. 34. Johannes Lydus: *De mensibus,* 51, p. 108, Wünsche.

[32] Hippolytus: *Philosophoumena,* p. 115, Miller.

[33] Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam,* I, p. 79, Kroll; *In Platonis I Alcibiadem,* pp. 435-40, Cousin, 2nd ed.; *In Platonis Rempublicam,* II, p. 108, Kroll.

[34] Proclus: *In Platonis I Alcibiadem,* p. 61, Creuzer.

[35] De Dubor: *Les mystères et l'hypnose* (Paris, 1910), p. 67.

[36] Pausanias, IX, 27, 2; 30, 6; I, 82, 7; Proclus (*In Platonis Rempublicam,* II, p. 312, Kroll) assumes that Plato had heard the songs of the mysteries.

[37] Iamblichus: *De mysteriis,* I, 12, p. 41, Parthey.

[38] Wetter: *Altchristliche Liturgien,* I, p. 167.

[39] Wetter: *op. cit.,* p. 171.

[40] Origen: *Homilia in Jesu Nave,* XX.

[41] Origen: *Contra Celsum,* I, 6.

[42] Howitt, in Frazer: *The Golden Bough,* VII, 2 pp. 235-7.

[43] Myers: *Human Personality* (London, 1903), I, p. 106.

## CHAPTER IV

[1] Pausanias, VIII, 37, 5; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* p. 56, 194; Kinkel: *Epicorum Fragmenta,* 2.

[2] Diodorus, V, 75, 4 *ff.*; III, 6, 8; Macrobius: *Somnium Scipionis,* I, 12, 12.

[3] See p. 67.

[4] Diodorus, I, 23, 2 and 3; = Kern, p. 27, n. 95.

[5] Photius: *Νεβρίζειν*, Naber; Harpocration: *Νεβρίζειν*.

[6] Apollodorus, III, 2, Wagner.

[7] Human sacrifices were celebrated to Dionysus at Patrai (Pausanias, VII, 21, 1 *ff.*), at Potniai (Pausanias, IX, 8, 2), at Lesbos (Dosides, in Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon*, III, 425, p. 32, Stählin; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica*, IV, 22, p. 186, Dindorf; = Müller: *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, IV, p. 500, 5); Cyrillus: *Contra Julianum*, IV, p. 128. *Cf.* Porphyry: *De abstinentia*, II, 8, Nauck. Themistocles sacrificed young men to Dionysus Omestes (Plutarch: *Themistocles*, 13).

[8] Cecil Smith, in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1890, p. 343; and Harrison: *Themis*, p. 489.

[9] Stephanus Byzantius (Westermann): *Ἄγραι. Χωρίον . . . ἐν ᾧ τὰ μικρὰ μυστήρια ἐπιτελεῖται, μίμημα τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον.*

[10] Firmicus Maternus: *De errore profanarum religionum*, 5, Ziegler: omnia per ordinem facientes (*the Cretans*) quæ puer moriens aut fecit aut passus est.

[11] Pseudo-Homeric Hymn to Demeter, 47 *ff.*; 208 *ff.* Ovid: *Fasti*, IV, 535.

[12] Pseudo-Homeric Hymn to Demeter, 47 *ff.* Scholiast of Sophocles, *Œdipus Coloneus*, V, 1048; Statius: *Silvæ*, IV, 8, 50; Fulgentius, I, 10.

[13] Plutarch: *De esu carnium*, I, 996 C: *τὰ γὰρ δὴ περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον μεμυθευμένα πάθη . . . αἰνιγμένος ἐστι μῦθος εἰς τὴν παλιγγενεσίαν.*

[14] Apuleius: *Metamorphosis*, XI, 24 *ff.*

[15] *Inscriptiones Græcæ Siciliæ et Italiæ*, 642; Comparetti, plate 12, pp. 6-7; Diels: *Vorsokratiker*, 3rd ed., p. 177, n. 20; Olivieri: *Lamellæ orphicæ*, p. 16; Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, 32 g, p. 108.

[16] Photius: *κόβηβος*.

[17] Hauer: *Die Religionen*, pp. 415 *ff.*

[18] Plutarch: *De Iside*, 27; Herodotus, II, 17; Minucius Felix: *Octavius*, 23.

[19] Moret: *Les mystères egyptiens*, pp. 37-8.

[20] Haas: *Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte,* Lief. 2-4, fig. 144.

[21] Reinach: *Répertoire des statues,* II, p. 423, 4; III, p. 260, 3; IV, p. 257, 4-6; V, p. 227, 2-3.

[22] Tibullus, I, 1, 17; Ovid: *Fasti,* I, 415.

[23] Plinius: *Historia naturalis,* 33, 111.

[24] Frazer: *The Golden Bough,* VII, pp. 378, 381, 383. Hauer: *Die Religionen,* pp. 347, 401, 455-6. Bibliography in Berguer: *Quelques traits de la vie de Jesus* (Paris, 1920), pp. 182-3.

[25] Lloyd, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* IV, p. 889; Ridgeway: *The Dramas and Dramatic Dances of the Non-European Races* (Cambridge, 1915), pp. 231, 241, 303.

[26] Lévi: *Le Théatre Indien* (*Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études*), Vol. 83, Paris, 1890, p. 319; Ridgeway, p. 303.

[27] Schroeder: *Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda* (Leipzig, 1908), p. 29.

[28] Lucian: *De saltatione,* 83.

[29] Lucian: *De saltatione,* 79.

[30] Lucian: *Quomodo historia conscribenda sit,* 1.

[31] Allier: *La psychologie de la conversion chez les peuples non civilizés,* pp. 350-1.

[32] Stoll: *Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie,* 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1904), p. 441.

[33] Murisier: *Les maladies du sentiment religieux* (Paris, 1905), p. 151.

[34] Lévy-Bruhl: *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (Paris, 1913), p. 164, 184-5.

[35] Mallery: *Sign Language Among North American Indians* (Bureau of Ethnology Reports I, Washington, 1881), pp. 263 *ff.*

[36] Lévi; *Le Théatre Indien* (*Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études,* Vol. 83, Paris, 1890), p. 317.

[37] Jubinal: *Mystères inedites* (1837), p. viii.

[38] Petit de Juleville: *Les mystères* (Paris, 1880), I, p. 198; II, pp. 191, 194.

[39] Plutarch: *De libidine et ægritudine,* 8, Bernardakis:

ὀρχεῖται ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ ταῖς χερσίν. Athenæus, IV, 134 B, Meinecke: ὀρχούμενον ταῖς χερσίν. Lucian: *De saltatione*, 63, Jacobitz: δοκεῖς ταῖς χερσὶν αὐταῖς λαλεῖν.

[40] *Anthologia Palatina*, VI, 290. *Cf. Anthologia Palatina*, XVI, 283.

[41] *Anthologia Palatina*, IX, 248.

[42] Plutarch: *Quæstiones Conviviales*, IX, 15, 15, p. 747 E.

[43] Longus: *Pastoralia*, II, 36, De Sinner. The Symposium of Xenophon closes with a mimic dance representing the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne.

[44] Lucian: *De saltatione*, 63.

[45] *Ibid.*, 26, 67.

[46] Libanius: *Orationes*, LXIV, 113 (IV, p. 493, Förster); LXIV, 67 (IV, p. 462, Förster).

[47] Libanius: *Orationes*, LXIV, 70 (IV, p. 464, Förster).

[48] Lucian: *De saltatione*, 30.

[49] Tylor: *Researches into the Early History of Mankind* (London, 1870, 2nd ed.), p. 33.

[50] Lucian: *De saltatione*, 14.

[51] Scholiast of Lykophron Alexandra, 212, p. 99, Scheer.

[52] Athenæus, XIV, 29, p. 631 B.

[53] Lucian: *De saltatione*, 14: τελετὴν οὐδὲ μίαν ἀρχαίαν ἔστιν εὑρεῖν ἄνευ ὀρχήσεως. Compare 22.

[54] *Acta Johannis*, c. 94.

[55] Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon*, XII, 120.

[56] Grasset: *L'hypnotisme et la suggestion*, 4th ed. (Paris, 1916), pp. 185 *ff.* Morselli: *Il magnetismo animale* (Turin, 1886), pp. 213 *ff.*, pp. 195, 292. Other instances in Bernheim: *Hypnotisme, suggestion, psychothérapie* (Paris, 1891), pp. 31 *ff.*; Lombroso: *Hypnotisme et spiritisme* (Paris), pp. 29, 31, 32; Bourru-Burot: *Variations de la personnalité* (Paris, 1888), pp. 190-218.

[57] Grasset: *op. cit.*, pp. 198-9. Bourru-Burot, pp. 209 *ff.*

[58] Lehmann: *Aberglaube und Zauberei von der ältesten Zeit bis in die Gegenwart* (Stuttgart, 1908), pp. 542-3.

[59] Lehmann: *op. cit.*, p. 601.

[60] On stigmatism, see Görres: *Die christliche Mystik*, 2nd

ed. (Regensburg, 1879), chap. XV and XVI; and Maury: *La magie et l'astrologie* (Paris, 1877), p. 368.

[61] Janet: *Neuroses et idées fixes,* I (Paris, 1898), pp. 38 *ff.*

[62] Grasset: *op. cit.,* pp. 375 *ff.*

[63] Bernheim: *Automatisme et suggestion* (Paris, 1917), p. 74.

[64] Jastrow: *La subconscience* (Paris, 1908), p. 273.

[65] Jastrow: *op. cit.,* pp. 283 *ff.*

[66] Dieterich: *Eine Mythrasliturgie,* 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1903), p. 158; Lévy-Bruhl: *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (Paris, 1913), p. 420; De Jong: *Das antike Mysterienwesen* (Leiden, 1909), p. 216; Frazer: *The Golden Bough,* VII, 2, pp. 254, 257-8, 266; Stoll: *op. cit.,* pp. 289 *ff.*; Frazer: *The Belief in Immortality,* I, p. 254.

[67] Lévy-Bruhl, p. 420.

[68] Hubert-Mauss: *Melanges d'histoire des religions* (Paris, 1909), p. 162. Lévy-Bruhl, p. 418.

[69] Hubert-Mauss, p. 177.

[70] Hubert-Mauss, p. 164; Frazer, VII, 2, p. 234.

[71] Silberer: *Vom Tod zum Leben,* p. 26.

[72] D'Alviella, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* VIII, p. 318.

[73] Pierre Janet: *L'Automatisme psychologique* (Paris, 1889), p. 14.

[74] Jastrow: *La subconscience,* p. 246.

[75] Despine: *Étude scientifique sur le somnambulisme* (Paris, 1880), p. 382. *Cf.* Morand: *Le magnetisme animale* (Paris, 1889), p. 112.

[76] Morselli: *Il magnetismo animale* (Turin, 1886), p. 292.

## CHAPTER V

[1] On the Titanic sin, Dio Chrysostomus: *Orationes,* XXX, p. 550, Dindorf; Olympiodorus, in Wittenbach: *Platonis Phædon* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1810), p. 134. *Cf.* the allusion of Hippolytus dying, in Euripides: *Hippolytus,* 1379 *ff.*

[2] Philolaus, in Clement of Alexandria: *Stromata,* III, 17, 1

(II, p. 203, Stählin); = Diels, fr. 14; Hippolytus: *Refutatio omnium hæresiarum,* VI, 24, p. 267, Duncker-Schneidewin; Athenæus, IV, p. 157 C, Meinecke; Plato: *Gorgias,* p. 493 A, *Phædo,* p. 60 B, *Cratylus,* p. 400 B; Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 3, p. 47, Pistelli; Plotinus: *Enneads,* IV, 1, p. 469, Volkmann. *Cf.* Pseudo-Heraclitus: *Epistulæ,* V, p. 73, 9 ff., Bywater; Sextus Empiricus: *Hypotyposeis,* III, 230, Mutschmann; Gregorius Nazianzenus: *Orationes,* VII, 22 (Migne: *Patrologia Græca,* 35, p. 784 D); Basilius Minor: *Scholia in Gregorii Nazianzenis, Orationes,* VII (Migne: *Patrologia Græca,* p. 1200).

[3] Proclus: *In Platonis Cratylum,* p. 82, CXXXIII, Pasquali; Olympiodorus: *In Platonis Phædonem,* B 161, p. 120, Norvin.

[4] Plato: *Phædo,* p. 67 A; = Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 13, p. 65; Olympiodorus: *In Platonis Phædonem,* A VII, 2, Norvin.

[5] Diodorus, V, 49, 6.

[6] Cicero: *De Legibus,* II, 14. *Cf.* Aristides: *Orationes,* XIX, 1, p. 451, Dindorf; Isocrates: *Panegyricus,* XXVIII, p. 46 B, Benseler.

[7] *Orphic Hymns,* IV, 9; XV, 11; XIX, 24; VIII, 20; LXXII, 10; XIII, 10; XVII, 9; XVIII, 19; XXVII, 14; LII, 13; XLV, 7; LVIII, 9; LXI, 11.

[8] Especially v. 996 *ff.*

[9] Aristophanes: *Frogs,* 457 *ff.* *ὅσοι μεμυήμεθ' εὐσεβῆ τε διῆγομεν τρόπον περὶ τοὺς ξένους καὶ τοὺς ἰδιώτας.*

[10] Aristotle: *Politics,* I, p. 1252 B, 5, Bekker; *cf.* Plato: *Republic,* 469 C; Demosthenes, *III Olynthiaca,* 24.

[11] Diogenes made fun of this principle which gave blessedness to a thief if initiated, and refused it to a man like Epaminondas (Plutarch: *De audiendis poetis,* 4, p. 21 F, Bernardakis). *Cf.* Diogenes Laërtius, VI, 2, 39.

[12] V. 466 *ff.*

[13] Inscribed on the golden leaflets: Kaibel: *Inscriptiones Græcæ Siciliæ et Italiæ,* 642; Diels: *Vorsokratiker,* 2nd ed., p. 481, 20: *θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου.* Kaibel, 641; Diels, p. 480,

18: θεὸς δ' ἔση ἀντὶ βροτοῖο. *Cf. Carmen aureum,* 71: ἔσσεαι ἀθάνατος θεὸς ἄμβροτος; and Aristophanes: *Frogs,* 1158.

[14] Plato: *Phædo,* 69 C; golden leaflet, Kaibel, 638; Diels, p. 480, n. 17; Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 32 a.

[15] Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 1, 31; *Carmen aureum,* 79; Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam,* II, 129, 1 *ff.,* Kroll; *ibid.* II, 132, 19, Kroll; Pseudo-Pindar, fr. 132, Bergk-Schroeder; *Corpus Inscriptionum Atticarum,* I, 442; Kaibel: *Epigrammata græca ex lapidibus conlecta,* 41. *Cf.* Epicharmus, fr. 22, Diels; Euripides: *Suppliants,* 533 *ff.*; Pseudo-Heraclitus: *Epistulæ,* V, p. 73, 1 *ff.,* Bywater. In the Orphic myth of Er (Plato: *Republic,* X, 614 D) the pure souls descend from heaven.

[16] Reinach: *Répertoire des Reliefs,* II, 51 *ff.*

[17] Pindar, fr. 129-30, Bergk-Schroeder; *Olympica,* II, 66 *ff.*

[18] Pseudo-Plato: *Axiochus,* 13.

[19] Vergil: *Æneid,* VI, 638 *ff.*

[20] *Cf.* the epitaph of a hierophant, *Revue archéologique,* III, 1883, p. 81, n. 3.

[21] Euripides: *Bacchants,* 473 *ff.*

[22] Plato: *Phædo,* p. 62 B; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* 221.

[23] Hieronymus, in Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 21. The *Minyad,* whether or not identified with the Orphic Katabasis (*cf.* Preller-Robert: *Griechische Mythologie* [Berlin, 1920], p. 50, n. 7), contained only descriptions of punishments (Wilamowitz: *Homerische Untersuchungen,* pp. 199 *ff.*).

[24] Pausanias, X, 28 *ff.*; Overbeck: *Die antiken Schriftquellen,* 1050.

[25] *Anthologia Palatina,* IX, 792; = Overbeck, 1818; Plinius: *Historia Naturalis,* XXXV, 132; = Overbeck, 1816, 6.

[26] Demosthenes, XXV, 52; Plautus: *Captivi,* V, 4, 15 (998); Cicero: *Tusculanæ Disputationes,* I, 16; Lutatius Placidus: *In Statii Thebaidem,* IV, 516, Jahnke.

[27] Diodorus, XII, 9, 4; Diogenes Laërtius, VIII, 8, 89. *Cf.* the names of southern Italian Pythagoreans in Kern: *Orphi-*

*corum Fragmenta,* p. 52, n. 73 *ff.* On the revolt, see especially Ciaceri: *Storia della Magna Grecia,* II (Milan, 1927), pp. 261 *ff.*

[28] Livy, IX, 40.

[29] See, for instance, *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1881, pp. 417-8, plate VIII; 1906, pp. 469 *ff.*; 1886, p. 101; *Römische Mitteilungen,* 1912, pp. 107 *ff.*, plate IV; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1881, p. 249; 1893, pp. 424 *ff.*; *Bollettino dell' Instituto,* 1834, pp. 228 *ff.*; 1837, pp. 162 *ff.*; *p.* 82; Ruggiero: *Scavi del reame di Napoli,* pp. 201 *ff.*, 232, 345, 359; *Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* I, pp. 954 *ff.*; *Bollettino archeologico napolitano,* New Series II, plates 10-15, pp. 180 *ff.*; *Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* XX, p. 22, fig. 10, pp. 23-4; *Bollettino archeologico napolitano,* New Series III, pp. 94 *ff.*

[30] *Bollettino dell' Instituto,* 1836, pp. 164-5; Ruggiero, p. 458; *Documenti per servire alla storia dei Musei d'Italia,* IV, pp. 115, 116, 117, 120; Fiorelli: *Catalogo del Museo di Napoli Armi,* 12-17, 29-36; *Bollettino archeologico napolitano,* III, pp. 94 *ff.*; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1877, p. 355; 1880, p. 404; 1884, p. 251; 1893, p. 442; 1898, p. 201; 1902, p. 583.

[31] Ruggiero: *op. cit.,* pp. 566, 571; *Documenti,* IV, p. 115; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1884, p. 151; 1866, p. 92; 1893, p. 442. Sometimes terra-cotta chandeliers: Ruggiero, p. 550; *Römische Mitteilungen,* 1910, pp. 173, 178.

[32] Ruggiero, p. 550; *Documenti,* IV, p. 118; *Bollettino del l'Instituto,* 1837, p. 83; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1887, p. 427; 1886, p. 100, 1898, p. 200.

[33] *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1898, pp. 200-1.

[34] *Ibid.,* 1898, p. 201.

[35] *Ibid.,* 1886, p. 92, n. 9; 1893, p. 442; 1896, p. 494; notes 7 and 8; p. 495, n. 13.

[36] Ruggiero: *op. cit.,* p. 588. *Cf. Notizie degli Scavi,* 1893, p. 251.

[37] *Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* VIII, p. 227.

[38] *Bollettino dell' Instituto,* 1835, p. 163.

[39] *Römische Mitteilungen,* 1912, p. 111, fig. 2; *Bollettino dell' Instituto,* 1836, p. 163; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1893, p. 424;

*Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* VIII, plate V; *Apulia,* II, plate IV, fig. 15.

[40] Remember the nails on the walls of tombs intended for hanging objects: *Bollettino dell' Instituto,* 1835, p. 163; *Notizie degli Scavi,* 1891, p. 358.

[41] Quagliati: *Rilievi votivi fittili di Locri, Ausonia,* II, pp. 136-234.

[42] Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* V, p. 331 B, Diehl. The destruction of bodies by fire was considered a catharsis (textual evidences in Rohde: *Psyche,* 3rd ed., II, pp. 101-2).

[43] Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* V, p. 391, Diehl. *Cf.* Porphyry, in Augustine: *Civitas Dei,* IX, 9 *ff.* and Servius: *In Vergilii Ænæidem,* III, 68.

[44] Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* II, 65 B, Diehl.

[45] Law of Andania: Sauppe: *Die Mysterieninschrift aus Andania* (Abhandlungen der K. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, 1859, VII) and *Ausgewählte Schriften* (Berlin, 1896); Dittenberger: *Sylloge Inscriptionum Græcarum,* 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1918); Cauer: *Delectus Inscriptionum Græcarum,* 2nd ed. (Leipzig, 1883); Michel: *Recueil d'inscriptiones grecques* (Paris, 1900); Collitz: *Sammlung der griechischen Dialektinschriften* (Göttingen, 1889 *ff.*), verses 16 *ff.*

[46] Strabo, XVI, 58, p. 712 C, Meinecke: *Διονυσιακὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ συνδονοφορεῖν.*

[47] Lucian: *Deorum concilium,* 10, p. 533. *Cf.* the inscriptions to Anubis, Serapis and Isis, Dittenberger, 761, and the other Isiac inscriptions, Dittenberger, 754.

[48] Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica, 72,* Westermann.

[49] Herodotus, II, 81; Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica,* 155.

## CHAPTER VI

[1] On Orpheus, see evidences given in Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta,* pp. 1-79.

[2] The fragments of the Orphic Books are collected by Abel

(*Orphica,* Leipzig, 1885) and Kern (*op. cit.*); the Orphic Hymns by Abel (*op. cit.*).

[3] The belief that man by dying becomes a god is expressed in the *Carmen aureum* (v. 71), by Empedocles (fr. 355, Diels), by Plato (*Phædo,* p. 69 C) and in the Golden Leaflets; that is a period of two and a half centuries. Compare besides the second Olympic ode of Pindar and the contents of the Golden Leaflets. The funeral rite evidenced by the *Timboni,* belonging to the third century B.C., conforms perfectly with Plutarch's Dialogue on the Socratic Dæmon, which refers to the second century A.D.

[4] On the ghost dance religion, see Mooney: *The Ghost Dance Religion,* Bureau of Ethnology Reports, 1892-3, IV, 2 (Washington, 1896), especially pp. 663 *ff.*, 672 *ff.*, 701 *ff.*, 716 *ff.*, 755 *ff.*, 799 *ff.*

[5] For the Orphic dynasties, see Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* X, 4, 5; Diodorus, III, 65, 6; IV, 25, 1; *Marmor Parium,* A, 27, p. 15.

[6] Diodorus, I, 96, 4; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* X, 8, 4-5; = Kern, p. 29, 96.

[7] Isocrates, XI, 8; = Kern, p. 18, 60: ἐξ Ἅιδου τεθνεῶτας ἀνῆγεν.

[8] *II Kings,* 1, 2, 5, 6, 10 *ff.*

[9] According to Plato (*Symposium,* 179 D) Orpheus brought back from Hades not his wife really, but only a shadow or phantom.

[10] Hermesianax, in Athenæus, XIII, 597 D; = Kern, p. 14, 61.

[11] Textual evidences in Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie,* I, cols. 1809-10.

[12] Textual evidences in Pauly-Wissowa, *l.c.*

[13] *Odyssey,* IV, 560 *ff.*

[14] *Odyssey,* V, 209; VII, 257; XXIII, 336.

[15] *Iliad,* VI, 132 *ff.*

[16] *Iliad,* XXII, 460.

[17] *Iliad,* XIII, 301.

[18] Textual evidences in Rohde: *Psyche,* 3rd ed., I, p. 300,

note 1; Thraemer, in Roscher, *Lexikon der griechischen Mythologie*, I, 1, col. 1031.

[19] *Cf.* Rohde: *Psyche*, 3rd ed., I, pp. 301 *ff.*

[20] Plato: *Laws*, I, 637 E; Athenæus, 10, 447 B, C.

[21] Herodotus, VII, 111.

[22] Euripides: *Rhesus*, 965 *ff.*

[23] Aristotle, in Macrobius: *Saturnalia*, I, 18, 1.

[24] Plutarch: *Crassus*, 8.

[25] Cassius Dio, 54, 34, 5.

[26] Euripides: *Bacchants*, 677 *ff.*

[27] Diodorus, IV, 3, 2 *ff.* Euripides: *Hypsipyle*, fr. 752.

[28] At Lerna Dionysus was called out from Hades: Plutarch: *De Iside*, 35; *Symposium*, 4, 6, 2; Pausanias, II, 36, 7; 37, 5-6.

[29] Herodotus, 4, 94.

[30] Gruppe, in Roscher, art. *Orpheus*, col. 1084 *ff.*

[31] See textual evidences in Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, pp. 3-4.

## CHAPTER VII

[1] See Gruppe, in Roscher: *Lexikon der griechischen Mythologie*, III, 1, col. 1082 *ff.*

[2] Lucian: *Adversus indoctum*, 109; Philostratus: *Vita Apollonii*, 14, 14; = Kern: *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, 43, 140.

[3] Pausanias, IX, 30, 4; = Kern, p. 43, 142. Other *xoana* of Orpheus on the Thaigetos (Pausanias, III, 20, 5; = Kern, p. 44, 145) and at Pieria (Plutarch: *Alexander*, 4; Arrhianus: *Anabasis*, I, 11, 2; Pseudo-Callisthenes, I, 42, 67; = Kern, p. 44, 144.

[4] Plutarch: *De Iside*, 35, p. 365 A; Philochorus, fr. 22, Müller.

[5] Pausanias, X, 19, 3.

[6] *Compte-rendu, Atlas*, 1861, pl. 4; Overbeck: *Kunstmythologisches Atlas*, pl. XXI, 25; *Archæologische Zeitung*, 1866, pl. 211.

[7] Kern, p. 8, 22; p. 9, 24-5.

[8] Lucian: *Adversus indoctum*, 11.

[9] Proclus: *Theologia Platonica*, VI, 12, p. 376; = Kern,

172: *Ὁ. τὸν ἥλιον εἰς ταὐτόν πως ἄγει τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι. Cf.* Macrobius: *Saturnalia,* I, 23, 21; = Kern, 236 A, 235; Macrobius, I, 18, 17; = Kern, 239.

[10] Pseudo-Erathosthenes, 24, p. 140, Robert; = Kern, p. 33, 113.

[11] Texts in Kern, pp. 33 *ff.*

[12] On Peisistratus' reformations, see Busolt: *Griechische Geschichte,* I, 343 *ff.*

[13] Herodotus, V, 90.

[14] Texts in Kern, pp. 53 *ff.*

[15] Stephanus Byzantius: *Ἄγραι ... χωρίον ... ἐν ᾧ τὰ μικρὰ μυστήρια ἐπιτελεῖται, μίμημα τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον.*

[16] Plato: *Gorgias,* p. 497 C; Scholiast of Plato's *Gorgias, l.c.*; Proclus: *In Platonis Parmenidem,* p. 716, Cousin, 2nd ed.; Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* II, 20, p. 10, Pistelli. Plutarch (*Demetrius,* 26) tells that Demetrius tried in vain to be initiated at once to the Lesser and to the Greater mysteries.

[17] Nonnus (*Dionysiaca,* XLVIII, 967 *ff.*) gives a poetic account of the institution of the festivals of Bromios, Jakchos and Zagreus. No doubt that Nonnus alludes to the Lesser (Orphic) mysteries centered around Zagreus and the Greater (Eleusinian) mysteries centered around Jakchos (*cf.* Maass: *Orpheus,* p. 81, note 106).

[18] On the Peisistratean committee, texts in Kinkel: *Epicorum græcorum fragmenta,* I, pp. 239-40; Kern, 189. *Cf.* especially Gruppe, in Roscher, III, 1, col. 1133 *ff.* The three Orphics were Onomacritus, Zopyrus and Orpheus of Croton, and a fourth person whose name, according to the tradition, was Konchylios.

[19] On the funeral rites of the Minoan age, see Glotz: *La civilisation égéenne* (Paris, 1923), pp. 321 *ff.*

[20] *Monumenti antichi dei Lincei,* XIX, I-II. Dussaud: *La civilisation prehellenique* (Paris, 1914), pl. D.

[21] *Iliad,* XXIII, 164 *ff.*

[22] *Iliad,* XXIII, 65: *πάντατῷ μέγεθός τε καὶ ὄμματα καὶ εἰκυῖα καὶ φωνήν, καὶ τοῖα περὶ χροὶ εἵματα ἕστο.*

[23] *Cf.* the pessimistic after-life notions of Theognis (v.

567 *ff.*, v. 1193); of Sappho (fr. 69); of Anakreon (fr. 32-43); of Simonides of Ceos (fr. 19-33); of Æschylus (*Agamemnon,* 1451); of Sophocles (*Ajax,* 508, 1231, 1257; *Helectra,* 1159, 1166, 1170; *Œdipus Coloneus,* 955; *Trachiniai,* 1173).

[24] Plato (*Minos,* p. 319 D) says that Homer puts Minos δικάζωντα χρυσοῦν σκῆπτρον ἔχοντα; according to the myth of *Gorgias* (p. 532 G) Zeus has appointed three infernal judges: Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus; according to the *Apology* (p. 41 A) Minos, Æacus, Rhadamanthus, Triptolemus and everybody was just as in his life. In the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* (p. 371 B-C) Minos and Rhadamanthus are named. The Greeks attributed to Homer the introduction of Minos as an infernal judge (Oenomaus, fr. 1; Mullach: *Fragmenta philosophorum græcorum,* II, p. 361; Plato: *Minos,* p. 319).

[25] Herodotus, II, 52 *ff.*

[26] The ancient scholiasts considered the *Katabasis* spurious (v. 565-627 of the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*; evidences in Kirchoff: *Die homerische Odyssee,* Berlin, 1879, p. 231) but without being aware of its Orphic contents. To Onomacritus only the verses 602 and 603 have been attributed.

[27] Polignotus' paintings in the Lesche of Delphi were inspired by the *Minyad* (Pausanias, XXVIII, 2). On the Orphic contents of the *Minyad, cf.* Preller-Robert: *Griechische Mythologie* (Berlin, 1920), p. 50. Nicias, a painter of the fourth century B.C., painted a *Nekya* in accordance with the *Odyssey* (*Anthologia palatina,* IX, 792; = Overbeck: *Schriftquellen,* 1818; Plinius: *Historia naturalis* XXXV, 132; = Overbeck, 1816, 6; Pausanias, X, 28; = Overbeck, 1050.

[28] On Greek pessimism, see especially Nestle: *Der Pessimismus und seine Ueberwindung bei den Griechen,* in *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum,* 1921, XXIV, pp. 11 *ff.*; Diels: *Der antike Pessimismus* (Schule und Leben I, Berlin). Compare the expressions of Glaukos and Achilles on the sad destiny of mankind (*Iliad,* VI, 164 *ff.*; XXIV, 525 *ff.*) and especially the gnomic poetry (Theognis, v. 381, 245 *ff.*,

377 *ff.*; Simonides of Amorgus, fr. 1; Simonides of Ceos, fr. 20 [39]); *cf.* Sophocles: *Œdipus Coloneus,* 1225 *ff.* and Herodotus, VII, 45 *ff.*

[29] Plutarch: *Consolatio ad Apollonium, 27.*

## CHAPTER VIII

[1] Herodotus, II, 81; Plutarch: *Convivium,* II, 3; Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica,* 151; Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* V (III, p. 168, Diehl).

[2] Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica,* 145.

[3] Texts in Zeller: *Philosophie der Griechen,* I, 5th ed., p. 313, n. 1.

[4] Kern, p. 52, n. 174.

[5] On the political history of Pythagoreanism, texts in Zeller: *op. cit.,* p. 314, notes 3, 4, 5; p. 316, note 1; p. 322, notes 7, 8, 9; p. 323, note 1; p. 331, note 3; p. 333, note 11.

[6] On the Orphics of southern Italy, see Kern, pp. 52-3.

[7] Aristotle: *Metaphysics,* I, p. 987 A, 369, Bekker: *Μετὰ δὲ τὰς εἰρημένας φιλοσοφίας ἡ Πλάτωνος ἐπεγένετο πραγματεία τὰ μὲν πολλὰ τούτοις ἀκολουθοῦσα, τὰ δὲ καὶ ἴδια παρὰ τὴν τῶν Ἰταλικῶν ἔχουσα φιλοσοφίαν ἐκ νέου τε γὰρ συνήθης γενόμενος πρῶτον Κρατύλῳ καὶ ταῖς Ἡρακλειτείοις δόξαις.*

[8] Plutarch: *De Defectu oraculorum,* 12, p. 415 A.

[9] Plato: *Cratylus,* p. 402.

[10] Clement of Alexandria: *Stromata,* VI, 2 (I, p. 443, Stählin).

[11] Strabo, XIV, 1, 3.

[12] Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 16.

[13] On Hippolytus, see Smith-Wace: *Dictionary of Christian Biography,* III, 85-105; and Wetzer-Welte: *Kirchenlexikon,* VI, pp. 12-21, art. *Hippolytus.*

[14] On Noetus, see especially Hilgenfeld: *Ketzergeschichte des Urchristentums* (Leipzig, 1887), 615-626.

[15] Hippolytus: *Refutatio omnium hæresiarum,* IX, 7, I, p. 240, Wendland: *Οὗτος* (Noetos) *εἰσηγήσατο αἵρεσιν ἐν τῶν Ἡρακλείτου δογμάτων*; IX, 8, 2, p. 241: *δοκεῖ προσαντιπαραχθῆναι*

καὶ νῦν, ὅπως διὰ τοῦ ἐγγίονος ἐλέγχου φανερῶς διδαχθῶσιν οἱ τούτους νομίζοντες Χριστοῦ εἶναι μαθητὰς οὐκ ὄντας ἀλλὰ τοῦ Σκοτεινοῦ; IX, 10, 8, p. 244, Wendland: δι' ὀλίγων ἐπέδειξα οὐκ ὄντα Χριστοῦ ἀλλὰ Ἥρ. μαθητήν. *Cf.* IX, 9, p. 244, Wendland.

[16] Bywater: *Heracliti reliquiæ* (Oxford, 1877) fragments 2, 1, 45, 78, 44, 47, 24, 47 note, 35, 57-8, 59, 69, 52, 57, 123, 28, 24, 26, 36; or Diels: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin, 1912, 3rd ed.), 1, 50-67.

[17] Draeseke: *Patristische Herakleitos-spuren,* in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie,* VII, 1894, p. 161.

[18] Diogenes Laërtius (XI) says that Heraclitus' work consisted of three chapters: the first, *Περὶ παντός,* the second, *Πολιτικός,* the third, *Λόγος θεολογικός.* Hippolytus refers only to *one* chapter (IX, 10, 8, p. 244, Wendland): ἐν δὲ τούτῳ τῷ κεφαλαίῳ πάντα ὁμοῦ τὸν ἰδιὸν νοῦν ἐξέθετο.

[19] Fragment 52, Diels: *Αἰὼν παῖς ἐστι παίζων πεσσεύων. Παιδὸς ἡ βασιλείη.*

[20] Testimonies about the death of Dionysus in Abel: *Orphica,* fr. 192; = Kern, 218. For his final kingdom, see Proclus: *In Platonis Cratylum,* p. 396 B (p. 55, 5, Pasquali). *Cf.* Proclus: *In Platonis Phædonem,* 163, pp. 127 *ff.*, Norvin.

[21] Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon,* II, 17, 2, Stählin; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica,* II, 323-4, Dindorf. *Cf.* Arnobius: *Adversus nationes,* V. 19; Proclus: *In Timæum,* B (I, p. 334, Diehl).

[22] Aion was son of Kronos (Euripides: *Heraclidai,* 898), that is, identical with Protogonus according to Hellanikos' theogony (Kern, p. 130, 54; p. 158, 85); but Protogonus, Dionysus and Phanes are identical (Aristocriton Manichæus: *Θεοσοφία* 116, 15, Buresch; = Kern, 61. Erichepaius was identical with Dionysus (Hesychius: Ἠρικεπαῖος; Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* II, 102 D, E; = Kern, 170); Phanes with Erichepaius (*Orphic Hymns,* VI, 9). Protogonus was one of the names of Phanes (Damascius: *Quæstiones de primis principiis, III;* = Kern, 64) and of Erichepaios (Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum,* 29 A; = Kern, 167); Phanes was Aion (Proclus: *In Platonis Timæum Præmium* E; = Kern, 107).

An inscription of a statue of Aion at Eleusis (Dittenberger: *Sylloge Inscriptionum,* 3rd ed., 1125) affords a statement about the identity of Phanes (Dionysus) and Aion. Aion was son of Kore, that is, the mother of Dionysus (Epiphanius: *Panarion,* 51, 22, 8-10). Epiphanius mistakes the goddess Kore for the Virgin, owing to the meaning of the Greek word *κόρη*.

[23] Fr. 26, Diels: *Ἀθάνατοι θνητοὶ, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον θ τεθνεῶτες.*

[24] Fr. 96, Diels: *Νέκυες γᾶρ κοπρίων ἐκβλητότεροι.*

[25] *Ἄνθρωπος ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φάος ἅπτεται ἑαυτῷ ἀποθανών. Ἀνθρώπους μένει ἀποθανόντας ἅσσα οὐκ ἔλπονται οὐδὲ δοκέουσιν.*

[26] See especially, Kern: *Empedokles und die Orphiker,* in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie,* I, 1888, pp. 498-508; Kern: *De Orphei, Epimenidis Pherecidis Theogoniis quæstiones selectæ* (Berlin, 1888), p. 58; Capelle: *Altgriechische Askese,* in *Jahrbuch für das klassische Altertum,* XIII, 1910, pp. 690 *ff.*; Dieterich: *Nekyia,* pp. 109, 119, 127; Eisler; *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt* (Munich, 1910), p. 690.

[27] *Cf.* Empedocles, fr. 117; and Abel, 222 and 223; = Kern 224 a, b.

[28] Empedocles, fr. 95 *ff.* Compare the Orphic doctrine in Aristotle: *De animalium generatione,* II, 734 B, 16, Bekker.

[29] Empedocles accepted the myth of the cosmic egg (Aëtius: *Placita,* II, 31, 4; Diels: *Doxographi græci,* 363 B, 4). *Cf.* Abel, 48 and 53; = Kern, 60 and 70.

[30] *Cf.* Empedocles, fragments 17 and 18, and Abel, 123; = Kern, 168, v. 10.

[31] Burnet: *Greek Philosophers,* I (London, 1914), p. 77; Diels: *Parmenides* (Berlin, 1894), p. 11; Joel: *Geschichte der antiken Philosophie* (Tübingen, 1921), p. 419.

[32] Principal ancient document is Aristotle: *Metaphysics,* 987 A, Christ: *Μετὰ δὲ τῆς εἰρημένας φιλοσοφίας ἡ Πλάτωνος ἐπεγένετο πραγματεία . . . τὰ δὲ καὶ ἴδια παρὰ τὴν τῶν Ἰταλικῶν ἔχουσα φιλοσοφίαν.* On the Orphic elements in Plato, see especially Diels: *Parmenides,* p. 12; Dieterich: *Nekyia* (Leipzig, 1913, 2nd ed.), pp. 113 *ff.*, 120 *ff.*, 167 *ff.*; Maass: *Orpheus*

(Leipzig, 1895), pp. 328 *ff.*; Rohde: *Psyche,* 3rd ed., II, pp. 569 *ff.*, 571, note 1; Gomperz: *Griechische Denker* (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 328 *ff.*; Gilbert: *Griechische Religionsphilosophie* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 331, 341 *ff.*, 345, 352, 355; Windelband: *Plato* (Stuttgart, 1900), pp. 124 *ff.*

[33] Plato: *Gorgias,* 522 E-523 A. *Cf.* also 524 B, 526 B.

[34] Plato: *Phædo,* 110 B.

[35] *Meno,* 80 A *ff.*

[36] In the *Republic,* X, 596 B, Plato discusses whether or not ideas of artificial things existed, and assumes that God has created only *one* bed, the *true* bed, and not many beds as a manufacturer.

[37] Aristotle (*Metaphysics,* I, 6) reproaches Plato for having imagined that ideas are in particular places, like spirits.

[38] Gomperz: *Griechische Denker,* I, p. 520; Alexander, in Hastings: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* III, 744; Hauer: *Die Religionen,* I, p. 170.

[39] Plato: *Phædo,* 10-12, p. 67; *cf.* Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 13, p. 15.

## CHAPTER IX

[1] A capital point is the endurance of Pythagoreanism after its defeat in southern Italy. The *Katabasis* attributed to Pythagoras existing in the third century (Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica,* 252-3) bears witness to this tenacity. The numerous allusions of Greek plays to Pythagorean doctrines, notwithstanding their ridicule of them, prove that Pythagoreanism was, for good or evil, very popular (textual evidences in Koch: *Fragmenta comicorum græcorum,* II, 76, 279, 280, 290; Diels: *Vorsokratiker,* II, pp. 291 *ff.*).

[2] Orpheus was believed to have found some remedies (Pausanias, IX, 30, 1); Euripides alludes to Orphic medical cures (Euripides: *Alcestis,* 966 *ff.*) and to the magic power of Orphic sorceries (Euripides: *Cyclops,* 646). Proclus (*In Platonis Timæum,* B, I, p. 213, 20, Diehl) says that the Orphic sacred books contained some prayers which cured sicknesses. Proclus used to cure himself by having Orphic songs sung in

his presence (Marinus: *Vita Procli,* 20, Boissonade). Julianus (*Convivium,* 309 A *ff.*) alludes satirically to the magic effect of Orphic hymns. The Orphic hymns contain many words and formulæ against terrors and sicknesses (X, 29 *ff.*; XV, 8 *ff.*; XVII, 10; XIX, 21; XXIII, 6 *f.*; XXXII, 16; XXXIX, 10; etc.). People had recourse to Dionysus for recovery from sickness (Pausanias, X, 33, 10) and he was therefore named *ἰατρός* (Athenæus, p. 22 E). On the magic contents of Pythagoreanism, see Iamblichus: *De Vita Pythagorica,* 164, 244, Westermann. The magic papyri contain numerous Orphic verses and words (Dilthey, in *Rheinisches Museum,* 1872, XXVII, pp. 375 *ff.*; Dieterich: *Kleine Schriften* [Leipzig, 1911], pp. 28 *ff.*; Gruppe: *Griechische Mythologie,* I, p. 557; Dieterich: *Abraxas,* pp. 50, 132).

[3] *Cf.* Plato: *Republic,* II, 364 E; Demosthenes: *Orationes,* XVIII, p. 313.

[4] Plato: *Republic,* II, 364 E, says that the Orphic charlatans initiated whole cities: *οὐ μόνον ἰδιώτας ἀλλὰ καὶ πόλεις.*

[5] Baudissin: *Adonis und Esmun* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 231 *ff.* For Carthage there is the testimony of Vergil: *Æneid,* IV, 58.

[6] On Dusares, see De Vogüe: *Inscriptions semitiques* (Paris, 1863), pp. 120 *ff.*; E. Meyer, in Roscher: *Lexikon der Mythologie,* I, 1, col. 1206 *ff.*; Cumont, in Pauly-Wissowa, V, 2, col. 1865 *ff.*

[7] Epiphanius (*Panarion,* 51, 22, 8-10, [Holl, II, pp. 285 *ff.*]) describes a procession which the Greeks celebrated at Alexandria in honor of the god Aion who was identical with Dusares. He says that Aion was the son of Kore, that is, Persephone; that means that he was Zagreus. See p. 251, n. 22. The final set form of the ceremony was: *Παρθένος τέτοκεν, αὔξει φῶς. Παρθένος* is a misunderstanding of Epiphanius about the meaning of the word *Κόρη. Φῶς* can be very easily connected with Dionysus. Dionysus was often considered as a lightning god (Sophocles: *Antigone,* 1146; Aristophanes: *Frogs,* 343 *ff.*) and often identified with Helios (*Etymologicum Magnum,* 277, 45; Macrobius: *Saturnalia,* I, 18, 11). Orphics considered Dionysus and Helios as the same god: Macrobius: *Saturnalia,*

I, 23, 11: Solem esse omnia et Orpheus testatur his versibus; *κέκλυθε ἀγλαὲ Ζεῦ Διόνυσε . . . Ἥλιε παγγενέτορ*; I, 18, 17: Solem liberum esse manifeste pronuntiat Orpheus hoc versu: *Ἥλιος δν Διόνυσον ἐπίκλησιν καλέουσι* et is quidem versus absolutior ille vero eiusdem vatis operosior: *εἷς Ζεύς, εἷς Ἄιδης, εἷς Ἥλιος, εἷς Διόνυσος*.

[8] Quandt: *De Baccho ab Alexandri ætate in Asia Minore cultu* (*Dissertationes philologæ Halenses*, XXI, 1912), pp. 241 *ff*.

[9] Dio Chrysostomus alludes in his Tarsian speeches to the Orphic beliefs of the Tarsians (Dio Chrysostomus: *Orationes*, XXXIII, 2-4; II, p. 208, Arnim; XXXI, I; II, p. 222, 11, Arnim).

[10] Dio Chrysostomus: *Orationes*, XXXIII, 47, II, p. 310, Arnim.

[11] Josephus Flavius: *Bellum Judaicum*, II, 8, 11, Dindorf.

[12] *Maccabees*, II, 6, 7.

[13] At Jerusalem there was a temple of Dionysus called *Ὀρφέως Διόνυσος* (Johannes Lydus: *De mensibus*, IV, 53, p. 108, 18, Wünsch).

[14] Tacitus: *History*, V, 5, 25. On Dionysiac currents among the Jews, see Eisler: *Orphisch-dionysische Mysterien in der christlichen Antike* (*Warburg Vorträge*, II, Leipzig, 1925), pp. 393 *ff*.

[15] Plato: *Gorgias*, 523 A. *Cf.* 524 B, 526 D.

[16] Clement of Alexandria: *Protreptikon*, II, 17, 2, Stählin; = Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica*, II, 323-4, Dindorf; = Abel, 196; = Kern, 34. *Cf.* Arnobius: *Adversus nationes*, V, 19; Nonnus: *Dionysiaka*, VI, 169 *ff*.; Hyginus: *Fabulæ*, CLXVIII, 238; Origen: *Contra Celsum*, IV, 17.

[17] Diodorus, III, 62, 7; Cornutus: *De natura deorum*, XXX, 220.

[18] Justin: *Apologia*, I, 54; *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, 69; Origen: *Contra Celsum*, IV, 17.

[19] Proclus: *In Platonis Cratylum*, p. 396 B (p. 55, 5, Pasquali); *In Platonis Timæum*, V (III, p. 310, 32 *f*., Diehl).

[20] Justin: *Apologia*, I, 54 (Migne: *Patrologia Græca*, 6, 408

C *ff.*) and *Dialogus cum Tryphone,* 69 (Migne, 6, 636 C *ff.*). The prophecy of *Genesis* XLIX, 10-11, is: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes."

[21] *Apologia,* I, 54.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Cf.* for instance, Origen: *Contra Celsum,* I, 18. The *Φερεκύδου γραφή* referred to by Origen as used by Celsus is the *Πενταμυχος,* a cosmogonic Orphic treatise (Gruppe: *Griechische Mythologie,* I, 427 *ff.*).

[24] Plutarch: *De Iside,* 35, p. 365 A. *Philochorus,* Fr. 22, Müller. *Cf.* Dinarchus, in Malalas: *Chronographia,* p. 40, 1. According to Tatian (*Adversus Græcos,* p. 9, 16, Schneidewin).

[25] Plutarch: *De Anima,* VI, p. 726, Bernardakis; = Stobaeus: *Florilegium,* 12 (IV, p. 108, Meinecke).

[26] Proclus: *In Platonis Cratylum,* p. 82, CXXXIII, Pasquali.

[27] Iamblichus: *Protreptikon,* 13, p. 65, Pistelli; = Plato: *Phædo,* p. 67 C; Scholiast of Plato's *Phædo, l.c.*

[28] *Romans,* VI, 3 *ff.*; *Colossians,* II, 12; *II Corinthians,* V, 1 *ff.*

[29] *Romans,* V, 6-19.

[30] *Romans,* VI, 1-11.

[31] *Romans,* VII, 5-25.

[32] *Romans,* VIII, 1-14.

[33] *Galatians,* II, 16. *Cf. Philippians,* III, 9. *Galatians,* III, 11, 12.

[34] *I Corinthians,* XV, 14 *ff.*; *II Corinthians,* V, 14 *ff.*

[35] *Galatians,* II, 20; *Romans,* VI, 3 *ff.*

[36] *II Corinthians,* V, 1 *ff. Cf. I Corinthians,* XV, 44 *ff.*

[37] See especially *Romans,* VI, 3 *ff.*; *Colossians,* II, 12; *II Corinthians,* IV, 10; *Colossians,* I, 21 *ff.*; II, 11 *ff.*

[38] The original accounts are *Mark*, XIV, 18-21, 25-26; *Matthew*, XXVI, 21-24, 29; *Luke*, XXII, 15-18, 21-23. The sacramentarian interpolation consists in the following verses: *Mark*, XIV, 22-3; *Matthew*, XXVI, 26-28; Luke, XXII, 19-20.

[39] Haas: *Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte, Lief.* 9-11, fig. 16.

[40] *Acts*, XIII, 45 *ff.*; XIV, 1 *ff.*; XVII, 1 *ff.*; XVII, 4 *ff.*; XVIII, 4 *ff.*; XIX, 19.

[41] It seems that Clement had been initiated in his youth (Eusebius: *Præparatio evangelica*, II, 2, 63, Dindorf). Other scholars assume that his knowledge of the mysteries derives from the writings of Diagoras (Bratke, in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1887, IV, pp. 647-708). About Diagoras, see Wellmann, in Pauly-Wissowa: *Realencyklopädie*, IX, col. 310-11. About the problem, see Hontoir: *Comment Clement d'Alexandrie a connu les Mystères d'Eleusis*, in *Musée belge*, 1905, IX, pp. 180 *ff.*

## CHAPTER X

[1] Julianus: *Orationes*, VII, p. 226 B.

[2] Proclus: *In Platonis Rempublicam*, I, p. 118, Kroll.

[3] Fr. 42: *τόν τε Ὅμηρον ἔφασκε ἄξιον ἐκ τῶν ἀγώνων ἐκβάλλεσθαι καὶ ραπίζεσθαι.* Sextus Empiricus: *Contra Mathematicos, IX*, 193; = Diels, fr. 11: *πάντα θεοῖσ ἀνέθηκαν Ὅμηρος θ' Ἡσιοδός τε ὅσσα παρ ἀνθρώποισιν ὀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστίν.* Compare fragments 13 and 14.

[4] Clement of Alexandria: *Stromata*, 110, p. 715 P; = Diels, fr. 15: *εἰ χεῖρας ἔχον βόες (ἵπποι τ') ἠὲ λέοντες ἢ γράψαι χείρεσσι καὶ ἔργα τελεῖν ἅπερ ἄνδρες ἵπποι μέν θ' ἵπποισιν βόες δέ τε βουσὶν ὁμοίας καί (κε) θεῶν ἰδέας ἔγραφον καὶ σώματ' ἐποίουν τοιαῦθ' οἷόν περ καὐτοὶ δέμας εἶχον (ἕκαστοι).* Fr. 16: *Αἰθιοπές τε (θεοὺς σφετέρους) σιμοὺς μέλανάς τε θρῃικές τε γλαυκοὺς καὶ πυρρούς (φασι πέλεσθαι).*

[5] For instance, Poseidon is a personification of the sea; Apollo of fire; Leto of oblivion; and so on. Scholiast of

Homer, Y 367 (Dindorf, IV, p. 233). Theagenes' fragments, in Diels: *Vorsokratiker,* II, 2nd ed., pp. 510 *ff.*

[6] *Περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι οὐθ' ὡς εἰσίν* (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 51): *περὶ δὲ θεῶν οὔτε εἰ εἰσὶν οὔθ' ὁποῖοί τινες εἰσι δύναμαι λέγειν πολλὰ γάρ ἐστι τὰ κωλυοντά με* (Sextus Empiricus: *Contra Mathematicos,* IX, 55, 56).

[7] Sextus Empiricus: *Contra Mathematicos, IX,* 18: *Π. δὲ ὁ Κεῖος ἥλιον φησίν καὶ σελένην καὶ ποταμοὺς καὶ κρήνας καὶ καθόλου πάντα τὰ ὠφελοῦντα τῶν βίον ἡμῶν οἱ παλαιοὶ θεοὺς ἐνομισαν εἶναι, διὰ τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὠφέλειαν.*

[8] Sextus Empiricus, *op. cit., IX,* 54: *οἱ παλαιοὶ νομοθέται ἐπίσκοπόν τινα τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων κατορθωμάτων καὶ ἁμαρτημάτων ἔπλασαν τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μηδένα λάθρᾳ τὸν πλησίον ἀδικεῖν, εὐλαβούμενον τὴν ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν τιμωρίαν.*

[9] Plato: *Phædrus,* 246 B; *Republic,* II, 377 E *ff.*; *Euthyphro,* 6 B, 7 B; *Laws,* XII, 941 B.

[10] Aristotle: *Physics,* II, 8, 198 b, 18; *Divinatio per somnum,* 2, 463 b, 12; 1, 462 b, 20.

1. Taking the veil. The initiate prepares to becomes a mystic bride.

he *agape*. A priestess celebrates the lustral meal
crificial table.

(*Continued on reverse*)

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